

RUDYARD KIPLING : CRAFTSMAN

*By the same Author :*

AFGHANISTAN

- KIPLING'S WOMEN

AZIZAM THE DANCING GIRL

THE CRIMEA IN PERSPECTIVE

LIVING INDIA

THE LURE OF THE INDUS

TURMOIL AND TRAGEDY IN INDIA

THE UNDERWORLD OF INDIA

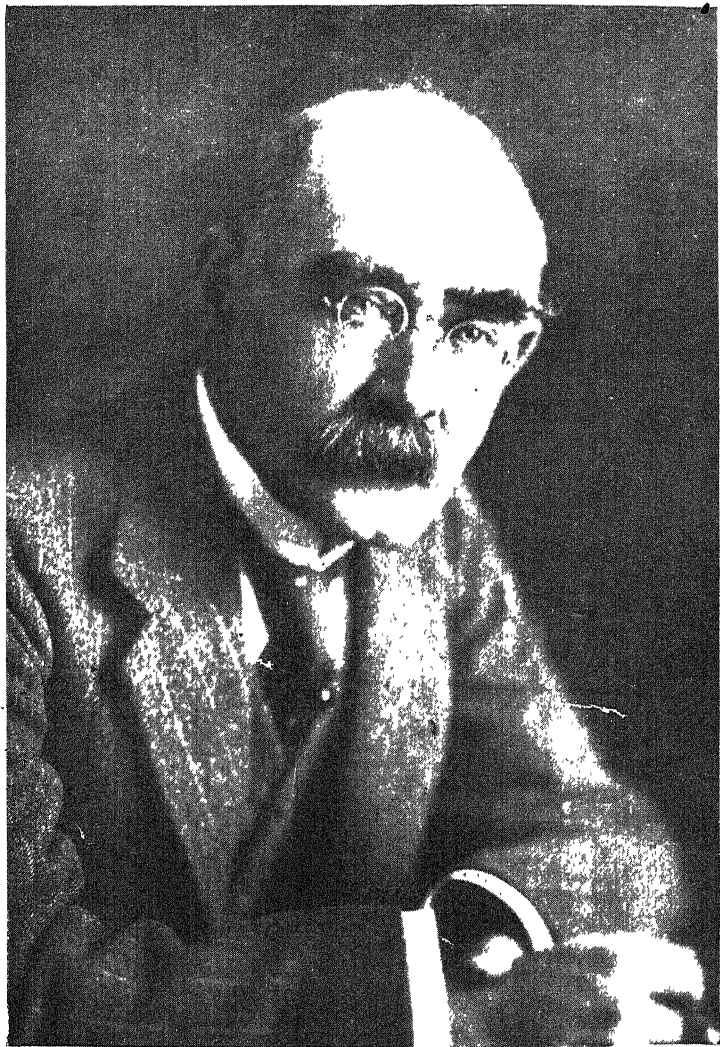
THE INDIAN STATES AND PRINCES

BLACK VELVET

THE GHILZAI'S WIFE

AZIZAN THE DANCER





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# RUDYARD KIPLING: CRAFTSMAN

Lieut.-General  
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K.C.B., K.C.S.I., D.S.O.

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## FOREWORD

GREATLY daring, but fired because I landed in India when Rudyard Kipling was electrifying the English there and starting on his great career—and having followed him eagerly since—I have tried my hand at an estimation of what he means to me and countless others. I do this with the knowledge that with the swiftly passing years many grow up for whom he can be but a tradition. This book may therefore be a guide to those who ask, “But who *was* Kipling?” Also I hope that many who treasure all he wrote and stood for may rejoice with me. I have drawn freely on the pages of the *Journal of the Kipling Society*, in which the cult is more than worthily followed. More particularly am I indebted to Captain E. W. Martindell, a Vice-President of that Society, for much material that he has placed at my disposal.

I am particularly indebted to Mrs. Kipling and Messrs. Macmillan & Co. for their approval of the rather free use of quotations from Mr. Kipling’s work.

As the proofs of this book were being perused a review copy of *Something of Myself*, Kipling’s autobiography, has reached me. I have dealt briefly with its charm and contents in the last chapter of this book.

GEORGE MACMUNN.

*The Dorset Lodgings,  
Sackville College.*

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# RUDYARD KIPLING : CRAFTSMAN

## CHAPTER I

### KIPLING'S PLACE IN THE BRITISH LEGEND

The Formula—The Kipling Saga—The Early and Later Critics—The Anti-Patriot and Pacifist.

#### *The Formula*

WITH Rudyard Kipling gone from us and laid to his rest in the Abbey, while they were bringing his dead King to St. Stephen's—a drama that none could have realized more fully than he—we may well try to take stock of all he stood for.

But first, since some may read this as the years roll past to whom Kipling is not as the Hagiographa or Holy Writings, let us ask—of what did he write? In the beginning he wrote little stories of Indian life, of the European, of the humbler Indian, and above all of the soldier in India, of whom the mass of you know little. Further, he wrote of them in a style, in a prose, in a verse that were new and fiercely alive. Then he began to tour the Empire and the world. He wrote of the Empire and its daughter nations as one inspired, to an Islanders' Empire made conscious by the old Queen's Jubilee :

*In excelsis gloria*

• Ringing for Victoria.

Then he wrote us verses of all our sweet, familiar things, of religions, of working-folk, of man and maid and philosophies, of the romance of our many ages and heroes of the Boer War, of Kitchener in the Sudan, of our political crises—of the lesser breeds who rip nuns for a pastime and shoot better men from behind rocks—of France that he loved, of the World War, of doctors, of nurses, of Freemasonry, and everything and every matter that we love and puzzle over. And then he died as he reached three score years and ten.

Such an output, such stories, such verse, such stirring tribute to great occasions, such effective perversion of the Queen's English to her, and its, greater glory, such complete books—though few—that all British earth may well bear



tribute for all time. And to try to explain and make résumé thereof is the object of this humble work—a wreath for the Poets' Corner.

It is not impertinent in the proper meaning of that word to ask what are the materials from which the character, genius and career, or life-story, of Rudyard Kipling was built up. The answer is, very nearly sheer personal unacquired genius with some help from the *genes* that went to make him. To be born of cultivated artistic parents is of course something of a start. To have a clever literary sister is an advantage—a sister so clever that folk in the far long ago used to say that the early stories were written by her.

If you have read *The Pinchbeck Goddess* you will realize that the literary gift was not confined to Rudyard, but the circles in which he moved would have been of little other help to him. The cultured and the artistic do not necessarily see much of the philistine world around them. The Kipling home in Lahore and Simla would have been simple and unostentatious, and it is not too much to say that they would not have mingled greatly in the merry scenes of the Simla stories, or graced Mrs. Hawksbee's board.

It must have been by listening and observing that he learnt the stories which he told so well. As a sub-editor to the Lahore paper, his seats were not with the mighty. But he was here at the very centre of Eastern life, had he the instinct and the *nous* to make use of it. The Sultan Serai at Lahore, the immense palpitating railway centre through which all India passes—they were great occasions and great observation-points and conning-towers. In those days the brows that would later have well earned him the name of "Beetle" were not the prominent feature in his face that they were of later years. He was small and somewhat swarthy, as we knew him in the years to come, and, in the slimness of youth, not particularly noticeable. That, perhaps, but ministered to his power of observing unobserved, enabling him to get where he wished quietly enough.

No! It was his own inherent gifts of observation and perception, his intense desire to browse in all literature, to look-see, to suck the brains of the men who know, that enabled him to make the most of his sense of the dramatic. It was his inherent gift of sympathy with all men and most women that enabled him to develop such a gift of story-telling and portrayal.

It is perfectly true that the popularity into which Kipling suddenly sprang, and the affluence that began to accrue, enabled him to make that series of tours around the Empire

and the world that made him become the prophet and bard of Empire in the best sense of the word. In *From Sea to Sea* and *Letters and Travel* we see that acute perception of values which had enabled him to make so much of his short sojourn in India, taking stock of the romance and the wonder of the Dominions and the glory and glamour of the Imperial relation. By so much, then, did this first world-tour enlarge his ideas and develop his outlook, just as it would have done to any other gifted man, literary or otherwise. It had obviously no real part in the fashioning of what was inherent and indigenous. From whatever angle we look at it we see that nothing in Kipling's life can have contributed much to the formation of his genius.

It was all there within that brain and behind those engrossing eyebrows, from that style, improved by voracious reading, and the rhythm of the English of the Authorized Version, to that keen sense of values that never fails to delight us. All genius and flair must of course be improved by experience, and now that he had become prominent the meeting with and often the companionship and conversation of famous men widened his outlook and added to the colour-box that he used and the material in which he chose to work.

There was in him, too, a remarkable ancillary gift. He was so apt to realize the whole from seeing a part, as a savant builds a skeleton from a single bone, that a comparatively little knowledge on some abstruse technical subject could be so used as to give the appearance of a deeper insight than he could possibly possess. It was a gift almost of intuition, of a peculiar kind. We see it in some of his modern stories such as *Unprofessional*, in his last book of stories *Limits and Renewals*, in *M'Andrew's Hymn*, and many another.

• Even when he had walked with kings he kept the common touch more than most and retained his almost shuddering hatred of personal publicity. In the days when he had become guide philosopher and friend to half the British world and nearly as much of the Continent and the States, still more complete and unassuming was that touch. So peculiar was this position that no writer before has ever achieved it, be he never so widely read and never so famous. The whole Kipling story is the greatest phenomenon that has occurred in literature, and though by no means baffling, for we realize easily the cause thereof, yet it remains, as it must for all time, a phenomenon simple to follow, easy to evaluate, impossible to account for, save as genius wholly innate, welling from a source entirely within and proceeding.

*The Kipling Saga*

For fifty years this man of genius, of understanding, and of literary power that came to the world as something quite new, has been able to charm what are practically three generations. It is not often that little stories of social life and happenings, of little human dramas, or even of sacrifice, are as familiar to the grandchildren of those who first welcomed them as they were to their forebears. Those who chuckled and rejoiced when *Plain Tales from the Hills* first appeared, those who laughed to see quiet, pungent fun poked at the high and mighty, those who saw that at first this strange little journalist was not thought quite nice in the purple, have seen him come, by way of wars and by way of Empire, to be the prophet of all those who love to see men at their jobs and women as their complements.

From strength to strength, from observation to glory, by way of the Anglo-Saxon tongue, misused often enough, yet never serving its turn so well, he progressed, while the people of England listened to the lesson and rejoiced. Because no one has ever before expounded to us the real heart of this wide-world Empire—which some folk would rather call a Commonwealth, folk of whom perhaps Kipling would have said :

What do they know of England  
Who only England know ?

—for “Empire” has been a good word for those who have made it possible for these islands to feed forty-five millions—we adored him fervently.

In the fifty—nay—nearly sixty years during which Kipling wrote for the English (a word that scans better than “British”, for all its insufficiency), every phase of our later development has been sung of with adequacy and understanding.

Before he came on the scene the product of the middle class had taken themselves far over the seas to lead hard lives of duty, to make the railways and bridges, to man the ships, or to manage the stores that brought the wealth home to Britain—the wealth, indeed, that enabled the working-class to indulge in a full quiver after the more intelligent had ceased such endeavours and turned their ambitions to more comfort, with baths in their houses, instead. These men had gone out and often died on their tracks long before Kipling sang, yet made little of it. Until Kipling told of the “flying bullet down the pass, that whistles shrill all flesh is grass”, no one thought much about it. The railway-men died in the jungle, their wives and children crept home on inadequate incomes, and no one thought of the “galley-slaves”, the men who manned

the benches in the galley, those battered chain-gangs of the orlops who crept home, some of them, with none too big a pension, or a few savings.

Then came the little journalist bred at a school that, more than most, trained men for the jungles and frontiers. He was none too good as a journalist, but all the time he was collecting in his mind from the chores of a sub-editor such knowledge and colour and curious underground behind-the-scenes insight as was to produce pictures to teach and charm the world, bring him great guerdon and greater fame, and finally a resting-place in the Poets' Corner of the Saxon Valhalla.

There are, of course, many points of view from which to study Kipling's art, his technique, his new and varied way of presenting his stories and plots, and his reading into the terms of everyday life some of the most striking facts of modern science. As he progressed through the ages—and no other expression quite sums up the hold that he had on his world for fifty years—his style, his methods and his subjects changed. In his later years came mysticism that at times made his stories hard to follow, for to this day many are not quite sure, or take different views, of exactly what *They* is about, or what are the points he most wishes to emphasize—all the more so because it is one of the most beautiful of all his pictures.

From simple stories of drama and tragedy in the early days, varied even then by striking turns to the macabre, as in *The Mark of the Beast*, the venue is gradually lifted to a wider field and to a far greater audience. The greatest example of his power, his yearly rising power, is that astounding story of London slum life and heroism that first appeared in the *Detroit Free Press*, *The Record of Badalia Herodsfoot*, the fierce ally of the welfare workers, interpreted with a verve and insight and a power, by one fresh from the bazaars and cities of India and the soldiers in the East. It was then dubbed, as it is now, "prodigious", and perhaps did more among those who work with the pen to bring the prophets to prophesy truly than anything else from his conjurer's hat.

Perhaps the best way to study and re-study his work and to explain it to those who follow is to divide it into two separate categories: those of time and those of subject. However much you may be a Janeite you would hardly imagine that she wrote through the long drama of the Napoleonic wars. The Militia she does note as embodied and furnishing characters for her study, but why they were so embodied and "were marching round the town Oh" you will not gather. But Kipling stories and verse are often fiercely topical, and

you may trace therefrom the history of the Empire for fifty years, as well as the domestic and political troubles in such matters as the Marconi scandals, Irish sedition and Irish murder plots, which are fiercely, sometimes cruelly, entreated.

Whence comest thou Gehazi  
So reverend to behold  
In scarlet and in ermines  
And chain of England's Gold?

The Afghan War, the taking of Upper Burma, the Boer War, the Sudan and the World War, stir him and remind us, and mark the march of the years. Naval controversies, "When the big guns drooped like a lily tired", trade unionism and its early problems, the coming of wireless, the Kaiser and his works, the phases of education, are all marked, as men mark tallies, by story and verse. Yet, *mirabile dictu*, marked and dated though they be, to this day the early stories read fresh to those whose mothers even were not born when they first appeared. But when we come to the subjects as distinct from the occasions, we have a different and even more fascinating angle. We have his interpretation and photography of women, whom the foolish used to say he could not paint, always women on their wonder side, staunch, alluring, sympathetic, helpful, with a rare intuition.

We have him with the Army and Navy, and about to touch the Air, the stories and characters of those who go to the sea in ships, from the skipper who took Paul to Rome down to Mr. Pycroft. We may see how the Old Testament is his constant inspiration for plot, for language, and for lesson. The mysterious Craft too, the brotherhood of the Freemasons, both openly and in veiled allusion, is a well-used item in his colour-box, and a delight to its members.

Early English history, Bronze Age, Celt and particularly Roman, and all they stood for in our history. Norman and Saxon and Dane, Henry Tudor, Good Queen Bess and Francis Drake, George Washington, Nicholas Culpepper, Arthur Wellesley cross the stage alive and human; and many though the stories are, English history would be the richer for more such interpretations than he has left us.

Indeed, in these groupings the fascination can be emphasized, and it is thus that it is here proposed to study the great writer.

There is also another phase of special interest in regard to his earlier work which it is proposed to touch on. All, or almost all, the stories and ballads of earlier days are based on some happening, a few well known, others known to few. All short-

story writers who write from life must develop and elaborate, for there are few real incidents—especially those with some graphic kernel—that are long enough by themselves to keep a short story alive. They may be mosaics of two or more. And those who have cherished the earlier Kipling work and have cared to know India deeper than the surface have often tried to trace his origins. These early stories are so striking that their origins can be equally so, and many a good story told round the mess-table, and at the club bar, has reappeared touched up by the master hand.

### *The Early and Later Critics*

It was not to be expected that a world-stormer whose whole methods, technique, purview and scenery, let alone strong gifts of expression, were so new and so different, should not evoke strong criticism. Much of it was sheer criticism for the sake of criticism, but still more was the study of his methods, the study of surprised admiration. There was also the not unnatural envy and surprise, the dislike of a roost-robber, of the man who had come in at the window and was receiving, almost at the pistol-point, not only admiration but competition and high prices from Press or publishers for his work. That line was soon abandoned as the portent's place in heaven became more than assured; but as new art invites genuine criticism, this Kipling naturally got.

There is little to be gained now by reviewing it. But as an example of high-grade, if surprised and pungent, writing, typical of the genuine criticism that helps even as it scarifies, two articles from Francis Adams that appeared in the early 'nineties of the last century have great interest for their value as criticism and their failure and success as prophecy.<sup>1</sup> Francis Adams was a writer and critic of power, who died by his own hand in Alexandria in 1893, at the age of 31, in depression at grave ill-health. He was a novelist of merit, and after education at Shrewsbury and in Paris achieved considerable success as a journalist in Sydney. *Leicester, Tiberius*, historical romance and dramas, and *Songs of the Army of the Night* attracted considerable attention. He was then a competent and likely critic of a younger star on the horizon, whose soaring power he appreciated.

Allusions will be made in the course of this book to the persistent attempt of the young critics, especially since the men of Kipling presentments saved the world in the World War, to dub him "Jingo". Everything sterling is anathema to a

<sup>1</sup> See next chapter.

certain class of young man of loose trousers and inferiority complex, the latter removable only by the acquisition of the right to an "old-school tie". For our amusement we may quote an article from that usually admirable, if critical, journal the *Passing Show*, in an issue of such recent date as October 1933, entitled *Mr. Kipling Doesn't Know*. Quite what the article attempts to set forth is not very apparent, save that perhaps Kipling is out of date and unreal. The opening lines may well be treasured by the Kipling enthusiasts :

"Rudyard Kipling has bequeathed to posterity 803 pages of verse. It is the work of thirty-seven years. Yes and strangely enough it is a Tory history of thirty-seven years. It is all in one book. There are 520 poems. They weigh 2 lbs. 11 ozs. It is a mixture of Isaiah and Mrs. 'Enry 'Awkins—prophecy on one page and slang on the next !"

Some little boys who cock snooks in the streets are cleverer than others over it, and that is the most that you can say, if you want to say anything at all. There has, of course, through the last generation and a half, been a lot of this sort of criticism, and those points in Mr. Kipling's style that are capable of being gibbeted—and all stylists give such occasions—are not spared. The line from the *Song of Sixpence* in the Kipling style that begins "The bird that is next the egg-cup is the one that shall give the note", is quoted hereafter.

The serious and considered criticisms and studies of Rudyard Kipling's work have been many, and for the most part richly appreciative. But it is of interest here to quote a few of the depreciatory ones, especially those of late years, when the grapes were too sour to be worth bothering about. So recently as 1919, F. T. Raymond wrote—those were the years when all strong thinking seemed odious and unnecessary : "Mr. Kipling is not perhaps a spent force. But it seems safe to say that he will never again be more than a minor one." . . . And yet until it rang to evensong in 1936, the appearance of a Kipling story or ballad in a magazine was an event in the literary world ! It was in this critique that he was charged with "affection for the Old Testament", curiously enough, a criticism coming from Free Church sources. Mr. Kipling had always reminded his friends that with a Wesleyan grandfather on both sides he must have had an inborn, besides an artistic, love of 'The Book'. In 1903, "Y.Y." remarks that "the *Seven Seas* contains nothing really remarkable, save a few of the jingling songs, and now *The Five Nations* finally closes the door to our hopes". Curiously enough,

again, the same number of the *Bookman* announces that "so great is the demand for Mr. Kipling's new Volume of Poems, *The Five Nations*, that the publishers have to go to press again," and that the number of copies now printed amounts to sixty thousand", and we may quote Kipling himself on *Prophets at Home* :

Prophets have honour all over the earth,  
Except in the village where they were born,  
Where such as knew them as boys from birth,  
Nature-ally hold 'em in scorn.

Y.Y.'s criticisms might have held good in the days of Francis Adams, when it was still fair and good fun to 'eave 'arf a brick at a young writer, but not very egregious a decade later.

In 1918, Harold Williams wrote in *Modern English Writers* of Kipling's verse : "His popularity and his credit have already waned", and of his prose : "That Mr. Kipling has been the most phenomenally popular author of our day . . . and has ceased to be so for more than a decade—are facts apparent to all." To which the devil of grimness perhaps counters "Are they?" and : ". . . 'O, 'tis won'erable good for the Prophet.'"

Mr. St. John Adcock rather misses fire in his *Gods of Modern Grub Street*, writing thus of Kipling :

"A certain arrogance and cocksureness had increased upon him ; his god was the old Hebrew god of battles, his the chosen race, and even amid the magnificent contritions of the *Recessional* he cannot forget that we are superior to the 'lesser breeds without the law'. He is no idealist, and has no sympathy with the hopes of the poor and lowly."

From all of which one can surmise that the school tie is either in defect or has turned sour on him. Mr. Adcock is not a very logical gentleman, and plays for safety by adding, in reference to *Puck of Pook's Hill* and *The Years Between* : "These rarer, kindlier moods, these larger-hearted emotions, are at least as characteristic of him." Mr. Adcock thinks Kipling stagnated at Burwash ; but then William Shakespeare stagnated at Stratford.

It is not worth while to quote to refute, but as the schoolboy said, "No one is safe in an omnibus with a woman". When you know how these great over-populated islands and super-abundant writers are fed by the great world house that Britons have built, as Kipling knew, your muse may well abide chiefly among the men that did it, that the other folk might live, and leave the aspirations of these thus fed to others. Lacon, in



*Lectures to Living Authors*, is worth reading for his appreciative and genuine criticism.

• Mr. Arnold Bennett, as might well be expected, dips his pen in bile and subconscious jealousy: "*Stalky and Co.* cooled me, and *Kim* chilled me." Well, it is a free country, and why not dislike things if you want to? To assume that it matters is another question. However, he does repent and admits that De Maupassant and Tchekoff have "neither of them surpassed Kipling at his best".

Of the many everlasting tributes by great characters and writers it is not necessary to write; they are countless and gratifying. Many nations have paid many loving tributes, —notably, in France, M. André Chevrillon and M. André Maurois, not among the critics but as whole-hearted admirers. There are two points to remember about this matter of criticism. To all beginners at all games and tasks there is a right and a wrong way to hold your clubs, to use your bat, and to handle your language, but to the *arrivé*, in literature as in golf, the only thing that matters is: Can you hit the ball? The defects and peculiarities of style, of diction, the assumptions of knowledge and the arrogance of certainty, were all, not unnaturally, targets for criticism in 1892. The great sales figures that show what the hearts of the men and women for whom he wrote thought about it, prove all that is necessary. Writers write for the people, and not for those who don't like them.

Appreciations and examinations are one thing, criticism disappears to a great extent with arrival, and there is not much more to be said on that head. The criticism of Francis Adams is examined in more detail in the next chapter, for it is the best example extant of real criticism, and early criticism at that, that is to be found.

### *The Anti-Patriot and Pacifist*

It is perhaps as well here to say something of the sort of criticism, so prevalent in certain not very important circles at times, that elects to label some of Kipling's more virile writings as "Jingo". These were written to tell the apathetic people of England of dangers ahead, and what their young men endured for them, and how empires and even commonwealths are kept sane and prosperous.

The criticisms are not worthy ones, but lest children of the future may read without context and be defiled, a few words thereon may be indulged in.

Incidentally, it is not out of place to examine the origin of

this terrible epithet "Jingo", applied to those who would "throw their weight about" to defy the outside world. Like so many good things of the past, crowned now by the typically British outlook in the latest tag, "You can't do that there 'ere", it has been perverted in its interpretation. A similar lapse is noticeable in the writings of the young peripatetic journalist who has learnt a few words of Hindustani in which to rejoice at what he calls the "End of the *Raj*". He likes to think that *puckka sahib* means an overbearing type of Saxon, when really it is something of a very different import. In the days when Russia was threatening the world—in the last quarter of the nineteenth century—there appeared in the music-halls a patriotic song referring to such events as the despatch of the British Fleet to Besika Bay, near the mouth of the Dardanelles. Its refrain ran :

We don't want to fight,  
But by Jingo if we do,  
We've got the ships, we've got the men,  
And we've got the money too.

The Gladstonian Liberal affixed the nickname "Jingo" to those of vociferous patriotism, cleverly enough as a party cry, but not very accurately, as the song deprecated action but emphasized preparation. It was not the song we have been, alas, able to sing during the last twelve months, and the peace of the world has suffered thereby. Colonel Jingo has now become Colonel Blimp—but Jingo is really a misnomer.

The "British"—for in this connection we can use the more comprehensive word—contain many strange racial strains, even when they are of true and ancient origin and not Levantines, or the Chosen rejoicing as Gordon. In every crisis of this nation for many centuries there have arisen those for whom country is nothing, who have soured themselves over the possible grievances of the other side, and whose minds have a kink that seems abnormal. It is, perhaps, the Bronze Age strain, something of North Celtic Pict or Iberian, races whose hands never did keep their heads, for all their ingenuities and megaliths. *Chez* Hitler, it is the camp and the rubber truncheon, here we let them write for us, as our pet Raheres, which seems to be the Saxon and even the Goedelic way.

So perhaps we need not mind ; were they numerous and forceful it might be different. England is still a free country, and there is no reason why any man should like the Kipling literature if it is not in his vein and way of thinking. But even if he shudders at the world that buffets and holds by its own, he should realize, if he enters into the critical line for some

other purpose than writing for his supper, that Kipling's range is enormous, and deals with all the "sweet familiar things" of Nature—"the great hare lopping on the road, and the startled pheasant's heavy whurr", and of every soft and gracious thing as well as the hard side of Empire-builders and -defenders.

The late M. Louis Fabulet, who has been called the doyen of those who translated Kipling into French, has had his say about those of this kidney, to whom Kipling applies the noxious phrase of the "lesser breeds, etc.". Says he :

"Certain English critics have treated as a reactionary this admirer of the soldier, of war, of property rights, and human energy. They have pretended that his influence would serve only to retard the march of the world. For me this work could never be reactionary, nor could it retard the march of the world . . . a work which approaches so closely to the cinema, and diffuses so widely an acquaintance with mankind . . . but it has all the hall-mark of good sense. Ah ! I know what the intellectuals carp at ! It is because Mr. Kipling lends himself neither to paradox nor to utopianism : it is because he carries no stock of sweetmeats into the prisons : it is because he finds that man was created for action and struggle rather than for laziness."

That is good talk, and yet Kipling also radiates sympathy for all that are poor and oppressed ; but he has realized that there is a time for all things, "a time to laugh and a time to cry, a time to write tosh and a time to be silent".

It is the sort of treatment that culminates in permitting a murderous outbreak at Dartmoor that he is against, and to combat which he has written *Uncovenanted Mercies*.<sup>1</sup>

For Mr. Arnold Bennett to complain of *An Habitation Enforced* because it says nothing of the unsatisfactoriness of the English land system is to disregard the wise words of Koheleth, The Preacher.

Just as one had thought that criticism of the peevish sort was as dead as the dodo, here before the notes of the "Funeral March" have died away in the Abbey, the world is amused, if a little shocked, to find the peace complex of Oliver Baldwin turned on his cousin. So ignorant is he of words and men, of whom he would write, that we find him so unseasonably soon as July 1936 saying that Rudyard Kipling was a hatred merchant during the War—he whose son John was never found—always inciting the nation to ferocity, always urging anger. He forgets that "Kiss-mammy" never won a war that is

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XVII.

launched, or saved a nation. Further does he inveigh against the story of *Mary Postgate* as cruel, bitter and inhuman.

The story *Mary Postgate* is examined at more length in Chapter XVII, but so that we may join in the groans and lead the cheers, let us premise here that Mary Postgate, lady-companion, is preparing to burn the personal treasures of her employer's nephew, whom she had helped to bring up. The lad had just met his death learning to fly in the R.F.C. While in the village a new phenomenon arises, a happy child in the village is torn to pieces by a German bomb, and the bomber himself has crashed in the plantation hard by. Mary will not help the dying pilot, whose moans call for aid. "*Nein ! Nein ! Ich haben der todt kinder gesehen.*" Now that we are used in our post-War civilization to the war policy of destroying women and children so that their blood may unnerve the men, perhaps Mary Postgate and Oliver Baldwin would have run with the *eau-de-Cologne* and mopped his brow.

It is a sad story of a sad, cruel day, dramatically told and designed to turn our hearts from all thoughts of war. No ! No ! young Oliver, think a little harder, and think of old Oliver, and the day of the trumpets at Drogheda, and the day when hostile mustard gas may take toll of our pants and pelt, and then praise God from whom all blessings flow, but don't prepare to pet the German bomber who drops bombs on Merrie England ; for as your revered cousin has said in *The Islanders* a full generation ago :

Ye saw that the land lay fenceless,  
And ye let the months go by  
Waiting some easy wonder : hoping some  
saving sign. . . .

Before we leave the critics of the carping sort let us chuckle once more, for even in August '36 does one read an announcement in the *Radio Times* that *Brugglesmith* will be given over the wireless by the B.B.C. The paragraph goes on to explain that this is a really humorous story, with nothing about the "white man's burden". Tut tut ! One can almost see the writer's tie-less collar ! It is not quite a worthy remark, as is more than once dwelt on herein, and also it is explained that *The White Man's Burden* was written for and addressed to the United States, very fond of criticizing John Bull, when she took on the thankless task of bringing some law and order to the bloodstained Philippines, where the lesser breeds without the law were handsomely in evidence—the breeds that indulge in nun-ripping for a holiday pastime and incite their compatriots to an equally cruel liquidation before the firing-squad. The United States

would now be able to enjoy the same sort of abuse as John Bull. They got it all right in the years that followed.

To the feeble, the Pacifists, little-Englanders, and such like this Roland from *The Times* may well ring compline. It was written on May 12, 1936, on the appearance of the Kipling Memorial issue of the *Chronicle* of the Imperial Services College.

"Since the object of all the mature Kipling thought and passion was the Service of the Empire, not with a man's blood only, but also with brain and nerve, imagination and reason, with all that he was and all that he had, it is a comely thing that the purpose of his old school should have widened towards his own conception of service. . . . Rudyard Kipling was first and last artist and writer; and out of his insatiable desire for right form and for true knowledge, grew in his maturity his vision of Imperial Service."

And lest anyone should again say that Kipling's sympathy is not as deep with the worker, read hard *The Wage Slaves*—which might well be blazoned by the T.U.C. as their chaunt pagan and dominant, with sickle and hammer complete atop—save, perhaps, that it is to the glory of those who do the work, not those who don't. It begins, as it should do, with a jibe at the *Haute Direction*, those who do themselves too well from their share of industry. Listen :

Oh glorious are the guarded heights  
Where Guardian souls abide

Yet we the bondslaves of our day,  
Whom dirt and danger press—  
Co-heirs of insolence, delay,  
And leagued unfaithfulness.

That is a nasty one for some of our Captains whether answering to the name of Guide or not.

The fact is plain that without faithful, competent labour nothing can be done, and from every walk in life goes up the cry :

Send us the men who do the work  
For which they draw the wage.

Such as dower each mortgaged hour  
Alike with clean courage,  
Even the men who do the work  
For which they draw the wage.

The

Men like to Gods that do the work  
For which they draw the wage!

What he thought of the meaner agitator, however, he said equally strongly in *The Mutiny of the Mavericks*.

## CHAPTER II

### EVOLUTION AND EARLY CRITICISM

A Searching Critic—The Development of the Short Story—The Five Books.

#### *A Searching Critic*

WHEN Rudyard Kipling first sprang into the public notice, and became very quickly a world-stormer, there were, as has been said, many critics, especially among the stylists and literary precisians. One of the most searching is worth recalling, both for the justice of some of the points, the utter failure of its prophecies, and the use that Kipling was probably clever enough to make to himself of those criticisms which were constructive, viz. the Francis Adams aforesaid.

Two articles appeared in the *Fortnightly* under the signature of this writer, then well known as a literary critic of merit and importance. They appeared when the "green cover" books were famous, and *Barrack-Room Ballads*, *Plain Tales from the Hills* and *Departmental Ditties*, and his first novel, *The Light That Failed*, had appeared. Some earlier stories that had mostly been published in India had just been gleaned up, and some of his new travel stories, already mentioned, were added to complete a new book, *Life's Handicap*. Noticeable in this book was the number of very short and very effective sketches of the "Turnover" class, a feature of the *Civil and Military Gazette* of Lahore, in which no doubt they first appeared, such as *Little Tobra*, *Bubbling Well Road*, *The Amir's Homily*, *Jews in Shushan*, and the like.

The "green covers" stormed the world when the old Queen's first Jubilee had made Britain Empire-conscious and eager to hear of the lives and spirits of those who made it for her. Let us then for learning and instruction see what Mr. Francis Adams had to say forty-odd years ago. This is how he begins, as we might today :

"It was inevitable that sooner or later someone should make a systematic effort, in the interests (say) of literature and art, to exploit India, and the Anglo-Indian life. England has awakened at last to the astonishing fact of her world-wide Empire, and has now an ever-growing curiosity concerning her great possessions *outré mer*. The

writer who can 'explain' in a vivid and plausible manner the social conditions of India, Australia, Canada and South Africa . . . who can show, even approximately, how people live there, move and have their being, is assured of at least a remarkable vogue. Several vogues of this sort have already been won on more or less inadequate grounds, and the cry is still they come.

"From among them all, so far, one writer alone, led on to fortune in this floodtide in the affairs of men, has conscientiously and deliberately aimed high; taken his work seriously, and attempted to add something to the vast store of our English literature. The spectacle of a writer of fiction who is also a man of letters . . . is unfortunately as rare among us as it is frequent among our French friends. It seems something to be able to go to our French friends and say, 'Well, here at any rate we have a young Englishman who has won a remarkable vogue, and for all that is a serious worker, is a contributor to critical and creative thought, is an artist, is a writer.'"

With this commencement we may follow Mr. Adams with the feeling that whatever his criticisms, he is properly equipped with recognition of the new phenomenon. Living nearly half a century after, we have the advantage of him in all the aspects that matter. He begins with what was then the most remarkable of the "green covers", *Soldiers Three*. The *envoi* he quotes in full, of which we may here give the last of the four verses:

Small mirth was in the making. Now  
I lift the cloth that cloaks the clay,  
And wearied, at thy feet I lay  
My wares, ere I go forth to sell.  
The long bazaar will praise, but Thou  
Heart of my heart—have I done well?

"Certainly three of these tales constituted something very like a revelation . . . but also of a new writer of considerable force and originality. Nothing like *The Big Drunk Draf*, or *With the Main Guard*, had been presented to the reading public before, and the 'praise of the long bazaar' was justified."

Here again we are with him, but now for his first criticism:

"But as a gallery of characters, as manifest fictional creations, the success of the book is not great. . . . Indeed, one of the weakest sides of all Mr. Kipling's work is just the want of this very gift, on the assured possession of which he seems to pique himself."

And the fact is that we are a little bit inclined to agree, at any rate, that Mulvaney is the most live of the three, for all Learoyd's resemblance to the carpenter Oakroyd in *The Good Companions*.

But for the descriptions, our critic is all praise :

"Pieces of his description of fighting have been spoken of as unparalleled. Wonderful as was his first effort in this direction, the 'jam' in 'the gut betune two hills as black as a bucket and as thin as a girl's waist' where the Pathans waited 'like rats in a pit' for the onslaught of the two regiments, one of which 'had seen their dead' <sup>1</sup> . . . wonderfully as this was presented in the Mulvanean brogue, when Mr. Kipling trusted to himself he did better and achieved a masterpiece.

"*The Drums of the Fore and Aft* is one of those masterpieces which are apt to reduce criticism to the mere tribute of respectful admiration . . . it all passes before us like a piece of illuminated life. And with what dramatic power is it all gathered together and swept forward to the culminating scene, where the two lads step out from the rocks with drum and fife, 'and the old tune of the Old Line shrills and rattles !' . . . Whenever Mr. Kipling touches on a battle scene, especially a mêlée, he writes with the absolute mastery of it all. It is real pictorial magic. The charge of the Arabs on the square on the Nile bank (*The Light That Failed*, Chapter II) is too long for full quotation here, and too perfect to be mutilated ; but the following may be taken as a sample of the way in which he can render a personal interest in such surroundings. It is from the tale in his latest book (*Life's Handicap*), *The Mutiny of the Mavericks*."

We will not quote the extracts that Mr. Adams gives, but they merit all he says of them. It shows, however, the severe Liberal complex from which he suffered, which is constantly in evidence, by adding that this story "is for the most part a piece worthless of special pleading, but which ends with this admirable portrayal of the madness of a coward".

*The Story of the Gadsbys*, which is really a remarkable example of vivid, sustained dialogue which does not weaken or jar, and is extraordinarily expressive of the type from which the actors are drawn, comes in, however, for severe criticism. He admits the skill of the dialogue, and says that

"the talking and gesturing of the puppets were undeniably actual.

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<sup>1</sup> This refers to the Afghan habit of ruthless mutilation.



"The characters chosen for the analysis however are on a rather low scale and prove tedious when treated at such length. Seven pages of the silly delirium of a silly girl are too large instalment of predetermined pathos on one note, coming on the top of two even larger and more monotonous instalments of honeymoon and conjugal tiffing."

He forgets that Minnie is being "tried for her life". In fact, he now lets himself go with the Clapham view that Kipling can't draw women, and that his women are horrid.

"Here then at last we see the Anglo-Indian society life of today, and we see it from every side. Duty and red-tape tempered by picnics and adultery . . . it is a singular spectacle."

We who knew the good, simple people about whom Kipling wrote his early stories would not call it so—premising always that the very worthy and reputable folk do not make a short story! Nor should we agree with the critic that "out of the six tales specially designed to illustrate the social life of the Anglo-Indians, five are based more or less on adultery", for although, as has already been said, a short story needs an effective plot, these were stories written for an Indian paper and collected, not designed as a fell contribution to the Indian saga. We shall agree now, as then, however, with the dictum that

"in the way of short stories Mr. Kipling has done nothing better than the central ones, *At the Pit's Mouth*, *A Wayside Comedy* and *The Hill of Illusion* . . . the last containing the most admirable sustained piece of dialogue he has yet written".

Then Mr. Adams quotes one of those fierce pieces of description—and what he said still goes, and we will repeat the passage and his praise thereof:

"Picnics, rides, and drives, with garden parties and promenades are suddenly forgotten in a scene like this. The atmosphere within was only 104°, as the thermometer bore witness, and heavy with the foul smell of badly trimmed kerosene lamps; and this stench, combined with that of native tobacco, baked brick, and dried earth, sends the heart of many a strong man down to his boots, for it is the smell of the Great Indian Empire when she turns herself for six months into a house of torment."

That is the state of affairs when the visitors from Europe and the Parliamentary Committees are not there, and it is only

slightly mitigated in the large places today by electric light—electric fans are not so good as the hand-pulled sweep of the punkah—and the cooling run o' nights in a car. This extract was the cry of the night editor in the old offices of the *Civil and Military Gazette*, in *The City of Dreadful Night*.

We will follow Adams of the 'nineties a little further for our instruction, even to his own undoing, though we can see how a man who holds his clubs properly can laugh awhile at the young player, who has his own ways and grips.

"As for his men they have all more or less of the nature of the eternal barbarian, the atavistic impulse of ruthless action which lies so deeply and so ineradicably in almost all of us, under the thin veneer of our civilized refinement and good manners . . . yet his touch is by no means always certain. His false characterization has its parallel in false criticism, sometimes merely the smart superficialities of the imperfectly educated journalist (to whom culture stands for nothing more than 'culchaw'), at other times quite shocking tributes of respect and admiration to tenth-rate personages. Mr. Kipling knows little of English prose. The secret of the art and literature of the great Continental people is hid from him. He is too young, he has lived too hard not to be considerably in the dark about himself. The pose he prefers to take is that of the utmost smartness and cocksureness available. How else is one to explain the insertion of work absolutely vile and detestable in his latest book? [this refers to *Life's Handicap*] . . . It is one thing in the full flood-tide of your vogue, with name and fame, and all fortune at your hand to write in this way of 'work'."

And here follow the three verses of the Introduction, of which this is one :

One stone the more swings to her place  
In that dread Temple of Thy Worth—  
It is enough that through Thy grace  
I saw naught common on Thy earth.

And then he continues :

"To write like this, and then to present to us such unspeakably mediocre and wretched work as *The Lang Men o' Larut* and *Namgay Doolah* !"

Now, all this is not bad criticism, even if defective as prophecy, but we should remember that these were days when Kipling had not long escaped from McTurk, and a school of literary Philistines, and also had begun his life's work in India at seventeen. And we should also remember that in all volumes

of collected work there are gradations of merit and mistakes of editing. For that reason let it again be said that Kipling has omitted much of his earlier work from any republication, all the more ruthlessly because of such criticisms as these. It is all part of the law that no man is always at the top of his form, in more ways than one.

Adams quotes, in continuation, Dicky Helder's remark :

"Four-fifths of everybody's work must be bad ; but the remnant is worth the trouble for its own sake",

and then adds the following, for which we give him absolution :

"Very true, but is there any reason why a man who can give us such a splendid sample of story-telling as *The Courting of Dinah Shadd* or touch the very spring of the *lacrimae rerum* in the piteous narrative of *The Man Who Was*, should proceed to inflict on us work which even the most sympathetic criticism can only designate as beneath contempt? . . . Balzac could not afford to sign his name to such rubbish, for Mr. Kipling to do so is to send snakes to strangle his reputation in the cradle."

So there ! And yet some of us thought *Namgay Doolah* was rather a pleasing little study and a clever reminder of what the Irishry of John Company sometimes faded to. The *Lang Men* he can have. Adams, however, deals out his praise as well as his criticisms genuinely enough.

"Nowhere in his more elaborate efforts to delineate child-life does he give so perfect a piece of work as the little child idyll called *The Story of Muhammad Din* ; nowhere does his gift of natural horror find more artistically harrowing expression than in *The Gate of the Hundred Sorrows*, or in *Bubbling Well Road* ; nowhere does he paint the *Ewige Weibliche* with a more liquid depth of sorrow than in *Lispeth*, or *Beyond the Pale*."

And here the people shall answer Amen ! But Mr. Adams has more to say :

"There is one obvious quality in all literary work, without which the name or fame of a writer has no possible chance of survival, and that is literary quality . . . no one can claim for Mr. Kipling the possession of a real prose style or indeed anything approaching to it . . . such style as he has is merely ephemeral and journalistic smartness, and he never begins to do good work till he has consciously forgotten all about it, and has set himself down to paint his 'picture' or express his emotions as best he may. . . .

His youth and ardour, worked to white heat by the Indian climate and his hard life, have intensified his individualism to such a pitch that he cannot get out of himself, cannot render anyone or anything objectively. . . .”

Yet even the ranks of Tusculum can scarce forbear to cheer, and Adams has plenty of praise. “Beyond all question he has the gift, both of the happy simile and of the happy phrase”; and he quotes that well-known passage on the Himalayas which always makes those who know them ache to return.

“You pass through big still deodar forests and under big still cliffs, and over big still grass-downs swelling like a woman’s breasts ; and the wind across the grass and the rain among the deodars says ‘Hush ! Hush ! Hush !’ Admirable [agrees Adams] are these little descriptive cameos [of which he quotes several], which he strews broadcast. Sometimes they are enclosed in two or three lines : ‘The witchery of the dawn turned the gray river-reaches to purple, gold and opal ; and it was as though the lumbering barge crept across the splendour of a new Heaven.’ Again he achieves the same result in one single perfect epithet, ‘The drinking earth’. Three words to describe the drought-laden Indian land under the heavy unceasing downpour of the longed-for welcome rains.”

So you see the witchery of it all has seized this searching, well-equipped critic, for all his severity. There is a good deal more of the critic and the enthusiast mingled before Mr. Adams rings down the curtain on the prose. This is how he does it, and now comes our turn to smile :

“The case we have for taking Mr. Kipling seriously has surely been made out beyond cavil. His vogue may pass—it seems passing already [chimes of Westminster Abbey !], as all vogues pass ; but at least we shall not be able to declare as of so many of his fellows . . . that it was won on such inadequate grounds that a total extinction and oblivion were, in mercy to the vileness of the English taste, its most expedient as well as its worthiest fate. That could never be said of the man . . . who could tell a short story like *The Courting of Dinah Shadd* ; who could do such a piece of splendid analytical and dramatic work as *The Drums of the Fore and Aft*.”

After which we may ask is Saul also among the prophets ? So competent a critic as Mr. Adams would not be likely to refrain from an attempt to review and analyse Kipling’s

verse, and the essay is soon made in the same magazine. The amount of verse then published was chiefly that contained in *Departmental Ditties*, a purely local collection of occasional Indian verse, acceptable especially to the British in India, *Barrack-Room Ballads*, and such oddments, less than in his later collections, as might be interspersed among his stories.

This critical study is not so penetrating as that of the prose, and to a great extent is but a condemnation of poor verse and the feeble copying of other folks' metre. He calls *Departmental Ditties*—rightly enough in most cases—"but a feast of patter songs", and if that be so, as we all joyously admit, then the parodying of metre is almost a necessity, the one embodying the other. He also refers to the *Departmental* part of the ditties as "more or less discreet variations on the ever fertile subject of adultery", which is taking them a little too seriously ! An exponent of blank verse himself, he naturally has something pungent to say of *Evarra and His Gods*, saying that "it would be difficult to write viler blank verse than this".

On the other hand he says of *The Galley Slave*—and here the generations will agree :

"*The Galley Slave*, the last of the Ditties [he is writing evidently of the fuller edition, which came later], comes very near being a splendid poem. It has eight or nine verses which might be quoted as the most powerful expression of the heart and soul of the true Anglo-Indian which has yet been sung or said for the instruction of 'a sheltered people'."

Writing of the verse that commences

Was it storm ? Our fathers faced it and a wilder never blew,  
he, as a cultured critic, remarks :

"The two finest lines here, the couplet beginning 'Was it storm?' are followed by two that are feeble beyond expression and make one doubtful of everything."

The peccant lines are :

Burning noon or choking midnight, sickness, sorrow, parting, death,  
Nay, our very babes would mock you had they time for idle breath.

We can but admit that they are a poorish sequel to the glory of the first two lines. Anyway, the sum total is that *Departmental Ditties and other Verses* are no very great shakes, to which the comment is that they are not meant to be !

But when we come to *Barrack-Room Ballads*, he has plenty to say, and he commences his critique with a generalization which is worth producing :

"On the *Departmental Ditties* followed much in the life of the author which accounted for an extraordinary stimulus and expansion which must be taken into account in any estimate of his later work. It is given to few writers to awake and find themselves famous. Those who achieve it do so, for the most part, slowly and with effort and are too sick of things to care much for it when they have got it. Mr. Kipling, after the sojourn of a few years in his town of banishment, was suddenly called upon to shake off the shifting dust wherewith he played, and cast away the bread of discontent wherewith he baulked his hunger, for a real dance in metropolitan haunts of ease, with all the fun of the fair [for none of which in fact Kipling cared the least], and the fat morsels thereof thrown in with a liberal hand. His popular limitations were plentiful enough, his cheap efforts were daring enough to win him the applause of the intellectual groundlings. . . . Yet his achievement was so real and striking, his contribution to literature was so undeniable, that no one possessed of candour and intelligence could refuse to take him seriously."

Mr. Adams now breaks into somewhat bitter remarks, the last round of the old guard before it marches off, on "a self-sufficiency, so magnificent as that of Kipling", and then begins to distribute his rosettes for *Barrack-Room Ballads*. He writes :

"For the first time our 'sheltered people' have heard something approaching an adequate statement of the point of view of the 'poor beggars in red' who have 'bought us half of creation with the sword and the flame, and have salted it down with their bones' . . . they are a statement of Tommy's case as powerful and convincing as it is passionate and sincere. . . . He threw away the scabbard when he wrote them, and came to the test with those of us who complained that his later work was not as good as his earliest, and that the bolt seemed shot. Certainly it seems that whether or not the bolt was shot in his prose, it was not in his verse, and it is freely to be admitted that he has not only turned back on himself and put his ancient speech to fresh rhyme and rhythm, but has also struck notes entirely new. There is only one word for the ballads viewed from the calmer point of criticism, and that is 'taking'. They are wonderfully and tremendously 'taking'. . . .

"But the question that arises, of course, is : 'But is this product good enough, strong enough to last?' No single ballad has had such a furore of success as *Fuzzy-Wuzzy*.

A snatch, a line here and there seems already to have passed into our daily speech, but has it passed permanently? Is not the hour close when we shall all be hopelessly sick of doggerel, etc. . . . clever doggerel, but doggerel so much above the best of the music-halls as to win it a time-honoured place . . . inspired doggerel, in a word? Ah, that is less certain! The more often one reads these ballads, the thinner and thinner appears the worst of them, the more and more dubious all but one or two of them, of the very best, and as for the 'other verses', the twenty poems that follow them up, there are some so appallingly bad that they paralyse all efforts at consideration. The drop in Mr. Kipling is always from the stars into the puddles. . . . The *Bolivar* doesn't drift seven days and seven nights merely, she drifts 'to the Start' because everybody ought to know that the Start is a bit of local colour."

Now, all this is very good criticism of its kind, even though poor, as has been said, in its prophecy, and it is worth studying for itself, as well as for a warning to prophets. If we, however, realize, as Adams did not, that so much of the earlier stuff is but collected from journals read by the sportsman, the frontier soldier, and the Philistine, and reprinted merely because the public wanted to hear more of this young man, we shall not be seriously grieved. It is a long way from the patter in the *Planters' Gazette* to the poesy in *If*, in *Gow's Watch*, or the *Recessional*.

But again Francis Adams is reassured in his, at times, scornful wonder, and he has bouquets for the verse as for the prose, when his gall has been scattered. He turns to *Mandalay* in real admiration:

"Let me give part of this poem where for once his song is instinct with the lyral cry, with the note of the 'tears of things', the eternal voice of human regret."

And he quotes that superb ballad in full and adds characteristically:

"A hundred years hence some appreciative and inquiring person may be searching in the British Museum for any other work done by the man who wrote *Mandalay*."

He adds of *Barrack-Room Ballads*:

"Truly like unto angels' visits are the books which come to us as a sudden and sheer delight, and the reason is simple. For what, in reality, is rarer than freshness wedded to sincerity, and strength at one with beauty? . . ."

So, with this last cheer from Tusculum, we must part from this extremely searching critic, well worth close study, as no doubt Kipling himself probably found it, for its value to a craftsman. And we too may study it for the learning and instruction of the Brethren, in this case the brothers of the universal Kipling Lodge which flourishes all over our Empire. We may also look back through the years, remembering how, for two generations almost, has Kipling sung all our moods and sorrows, and we confidently feel with old Malachi that "He shall be mine, said the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels".

Adams wrote in 1893, and it was in 1936 that the world followed Kipling to the Poets' Corner in the Abbey.

### *The Development of the Short Story*

Adams wrote almost at the beginning of the great Odyssey which ended in Kipling finding no subject too deep and no feelings too intimate for him to interpret and uplift. As we follow story and verse we see his labours, his journeys, and his reflections thrown on the screen. It may be said that, unlike the majority of short stories, at any rate in modern times, which are written from imagination and set where the authors elect to place them, Kipling's stories are all based on something he has seen or heard of, or arise from the surroundings in which he has been placed. The actual romantic origins of some of the earlier ones have been referred to, but will be discussed at more length in the pages to come, but it may be accepted as a working theory that all have a basis of fact, or have been written to elucidate and illuminate something he has come across.

If we study the stories on the basis of their subjects, we see that all the "green cover" series, those of A. H. Wheeler's bookstall, deal with India, the British folk of the Government services, the Indians with whom they came in contact, and the soldiers of his triple creation. These books are seven: *Soldiers Three*, *The Story of the Gadsbys*, *In Black and White*, *Under the Deodars*, *The Phantom Rickshaw*, *Wee Willie Winkie*, and *The City of Dreadful Night*. *Plain Tales from the Hills*, though not in green covers, was one of these early issues. The same may be said of the early ballads. The first volume outside these early collections—*Life's Handicap*—published when his fame began to spread, was another collection of Indian stories varied by a few, a very few, that had come under his ken as he journeyed to the Far East, such as *Bertram and Bimi*, *Reingelder and the German Flag*, and *The Lang Men o' Larut*, all from stories heard in the ship's smoking-room, from an engineer who steamed the China Seas.



In the *Wee Willie Winkie* series alone, we get, for a moment at this stage, away from India, or, in the stories just mentioned, the Far East. In *Many Inventions*, while sticking still largely to India, we get one of the Far East in *The Disturber of Traffic*, the story told in the lighthouse, the first that shows the intimate knowledge of things technical that was to be such a feature of his art thereafter. But in *Many Inventions*, despite the prevalence of Indian and even Mulvaney stories, *Love o' Women* being one of singular power, we come to two entirely new indications and departures. There is the astounding *tour de force* of *The Record of Badalia Herodsfoot*, and that delightful extravaganza, also of London Town, *Brugglesmith*,<sup>1</sup> and also a new departure into applied mythology, of which more is to follow, viz. *The Children of the Zodiac*.

*Traffics and Discoveries*, one of the next books of stories to follow, has left the East, and we get to the Boer War with *The Captive*, *A Sahib's War* and *The Comprehension of Private Copper*, all three obviously born of happenings that came under his ken as editor of *The Friend* and as one of the pressmen with the Forces. And here again, another departure, another new note on the strings of his harp, that shows an uncanny appreciation of the heart of Sussex for the first time, giving us the first of the mystical stories, *They*, the blind lady and the ghost children, so rich in understanding, yet to this day baffling to those who would be fully seized of all it really stands for.

In this volume, too, we see the author in his new knowledge of the British Navy and the immortal Mr. Pyecroft; and also the lesser types, Hinchcliffe and others, in *The Bonds of Discipline*, *Their Lawful Occasions* and *Mrs. Bathurst*, the latter when the cinema first strikes him with all its implications.

But, and it is a remarkable "but", though the books appear through the years marking the changing of the age of the subjects and their treatment, it is generally felt that there is no great enhancement in the powers of story-telling. *The Drums of the Fore and Aft*,<sup>2</sup> and *Beyond the Pale*,<sup>3</sup> are as great in the completeness of the art as *Sea Constables*,<sup>4</sup> or *In the Same Boat*.<sup>5</sup> This is no disparagement; it but shows that the story-telling gift appeared in its full power from the first. It was the opening up of the world to Kipling that enabled him to exercise that gift in exploring and expounding a much wider scene on a far wider canvas. "*Faites moi voir !*" cried Napoleon to his

<sup>1</sup> Read on the Wireless in 1936. See p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> *The Phantom Rickshaw*.

<sup>3</sup> *A Diversity of Creatures*.

<sup>4</sup> *Plain Tales*.

<sup>5</sup> *Debits and Credits*.

staff and his intelligence. "*Faites nous voir*" was what we all demanded of this new young master as he passaged from Westward Ho, and Lahore, to the heart of Sussex, and via the hearts of men to the Abbey at Westminster.

It is because Kipling sprang straight into the height of his story-telling power that so many enthusiasts have said in their hearts, "The new stories are not like the old," and then, to chase so foolish an imagining from them, have come the wonder of certain stories through the latter ages. *The Brushwood Boy* is one that will last for all time, as the story of Ruth, the greatest short story in the world. Then *The Dog Hervey*<sup>1</sup> for human tragedy; *The Wish House*<sup>2</sup> for constancy, *In the Same Boat*<sup>1</sup> for sympathy, *The Bull That Thought*<sup>2</sup> for the glory of telling it, *A Naval Mutiny*<sup>3</sup> for laughter, *A Madonna of the Trenches*<sup>2</sup> for insight, and *The Gardener*<sup>2</sup> for understanding.

### *The Five Books*

There are but five complete books that stand to Kipling's name, and all happened between his final departure from India and the Great War. Two only are novels or romances—*The Light That Failed*, and *The Naulahka*, the latter a joint production with his brother-in-law Wolcott Balestier. Two are stories as distinct from novels, viz. *Stalky and Co.* and *Captains Courageous*, while, all by itself—story, romance or description—is the greatest, *Kim*. Of *Kim*, so immensely admired, so read and re-read, there is nothing effective that can be said. Something of Kim himself, of Mahbub Ali, or Lurgan Sahib, will be said under "Origins". *Ziādāh hud-i-adab*, "more is beyond the bounds of propriety"—Arnold Bennett said it made him sick ; but then Arnold Bennett, in addition to being *sui generis*, was often queasy.

*The Light That Failed* has come into its own of late years as a story—a woven consecutive story—it was always highly regarded for its bits and pieces of colour and description—of Port Said, of Suakim, of the sun on the armoured train when blind Dickie met his death—as a study of the women that wouldn't, of the little gutter-snipe, and of the girl with the red hair who would have died for a kind word and the love that Dick wasted on Maisie ; it has required the modern outlook to be appreciated. Maisie, nose in the air and mad on a career, to the sublimation of love, is entirely modern. When written, it was before its time. Yet it is a story entirely given to the study of man and woman.

*The Naulahka*, the search for the nine-lakh necklace in

<sup>1</sup> *A Diversity of Creatures.*

<sup>2</sup> *Debits and Credits.*

<sup>3</sup> *Limits and Renewals.*

which Balestier must have supplied the "out west" colour, is a really exciting story, and quite the best description of an old-world Indian State and rajah yet written. The inimitable love-scene between Tarvin and the Gipsy Queen has been given in Chapter XI, "The Women of the East". The whole story runs riot in Eastern colour and the atmosphere of old secluded States from the moment Tarvin joins a group of "travellers" in the ramshackle staging bungalow and steals a march on them. How he stole the necklace when he should have been exploiting a sporting offer is another matter—the Gipsy Queen was the better girl than she who wanted the necklace—but at all times is the book full of excitements.

*Captains Courageous* should really be treated of in that chapter which deals with Kipling's presentment of the United States. The spoilt millionaire's boy and his mother grieving at his loss overboard are fine vignettes of a type—while the scenes just before the lost son is restored by the fisher-folk—restored a man, and the hearty, generous soul that lay deep in him unbarred—are fine natural human scenes. The staunch and sturdy fisher-folk, and all they teach the young man, is a very charming output from this prince of new presentments. It makes all the world akin in its atonement of Nature's gentle-folk.

Fifth, last and not least, is *Stalky and Co.*—of which we have heard much from the deprecating Stalky, who even in far Peshawur was not safe from the enterprise of American visitors and had to hide with the Khaiberees from their attentions, and still more from the debunking McTurk, who would have us believe that there never was "no sich person". The truth lies otherwise; Kipling is a story-teller, and on the mosaic principle aforesaid has taken all the memories of schooldays, all the actual crudities and inhibitions and all their relaxations, to make a typical, if unusually told, school story—a story that fascinates all, even if they do not want to dot every "i" and cross every "t". And all Stalkyites should remember that there is a first-class Stalky story in *Debits and Credits*—*The United Idolaters*; and another in *A Diversity of Creatures*—*Regulus*.

To all who would ask, "Was Stalky like that?" I can but say I don't know; but I've seen Stalky tramping the Derajat, the desert country of the "People who live in tents", on the borders of Waziristan, at the head of a battalion of wild border soldiers of uncertain manners and sure discipline, and I should certainly think he might be. I have seen Stalky, a telephone in both hands and a bag of rupees in the third, ruling and urging half Central Asia, and I am quite sure about it. So that is that.

In any case *Stalky and Co.* needs no bouquet, and here you may see, as in all other schools for the educated, lads being whacked when they wanted it. This is the difference between Celt, and Saxon and Norman of the overlay, whose descendants are disciplined, and the Grimaldis, Firbolg, Picts and Scots who are *not*, who have produced the humbler fry. "Whip them and wallop them," Solomon said, lest worse befall—and take away their tie, if they behave badly.

This section has been called "The Five Books", but there are really seven, for you have the story of the Irish Guards in the War, an epic of sacrifice and of corps that eventually sanctified and canonized their social status in the Army by becoming "Storm Troops" who used to be known as *Foreloren Hoep*. And also Fletcher and Kipling's "History of England". In this it is the verses that mostly are Kipling's share, and the verses of English history that appear in the Inclusive Edition of his verse come therefrom, as *Songs from English History*. All are attractive. *The Anvil* that begins "England's on the anvil—hear the hammers ring"—tells us of the welding into a great people of Norman, Saxon and Dane, sea-dogs all. *James I*, "a shifty mother's shiftless son", perhaps deals unfairly with the man under whom the Authorized Version saw the light. There is charm in *The French Wars* when . . .

There'd be biremes and brigantines, cutters and sloops,  
Cogs, carracks and galleons with gay gilded poops—  
Hoys, caravels, ketches, corvettes and the rest,  
As thick as regattas from Ramsgate to Brest.

But *My Father's Chair* transcends them all for the wisdom of the English, sung by Henry III, who ruled and ruled and sometimes only reigned for over sixty years.

There are four good legs to my Father's chair—  
Priest and People and Lords and Crown.  
I sits on all of 'em fair and square,  
And that is the reason it don't break down.

I sits on all four and I favours none—  
Priest nor People, nor Lords, nor Crown  
And I never tilts in my chair, my son,  
And that is the reason it don't break down.

## CHAPTER III

### SOME ASPECTS OF KIPLING'S WORK

Metre—The Parodists—Kipling's Women—Chronology of the Passing Years—Kipling and Great Occasions.

#### *Metre*

OF metre, something might perhaps be said. It is probably safe to say that very few poets have made new metres this last two thousand years. The old musical forms have all been set and readapted often enough, whether the verse be rhyming or blank. Where Browning and Tennyson have found something seemingly new, the explorer would no doubt trace even their inspirations.

Kipling has obviously studied many of the accepted forms. That he was a deep and successful student and practitioner, *Sestina of the Tramp Royal* proves before all the world. He has tried with some success that most difficult of all metres, the *sestina*, with six lines in each stanza, none of which rhyme. The last word of every one of the six lines of the first stanza must be used again, but in different order, as the last words of all succeeding stanzas—an extremely difficult feat, which gives a peculiar cadence of its own. The stanzas must also end with an *envoi* of three lines, and in these lines the same words must be used. Two stanzas, the first and the last, and the *envoi*, are quoted here, the words in question being shown in italics. The *sestina* is a medieval conception.

Speakin' in general I 'ave tried them *all*—  
The 'appy roads that take you o'er the *world*.  
Speakin' in general I 'ave found them *good* . . .  
For such as cannot use one bed too *long*,  
But must get 'ence the same as I 'ave *done*,  
An' go observin' matters till they *die*.

It is a poem—for it is more than a ballad—of six stanzas, and each with this same use of the underlined words. The last runs :

It's like a book, I think, this bloomin' *world*,  
Which you can read and care for just so *long*,  
But presently you feel that you will *die*  
Unless you get the page you're reading *done*,  
An' turn another . . . likely not so *good* ;  
But what you're after is to turn 'em *all*.

and the necessary *envoi* :

Gawd bless this *world* ! Whatever she hath *done*—  
Except when awful *long*—I've found it *good*.  
So write before I *die*, 'E liked it *all* !

So there you have the happy tramp and a most difficult and complicated *tour de force* in metre.

After such an effort you will not be surprised that Kipling tries most of them. You will find that he has not essayed much that is new, as did Southey in his *Thabala*, or Coleridge in *Christabel*, but in his blank verse he uses, perhaps instinctively, many of the Greek and Latin feet, of which there were twenty-nine, a dozen in ordinary use. Westward Ho ! cannot probably claim to have taught Beetle elegiacs, but something did, for, as we have seen, he fears blank verse very little, *Iambus* and *Amphimacer* flow easily off his pen. The alliteration of Edgar Allan Poe he does not despise, and the similes that begin with "like", or "as", so prevalent in the Old Testament and in Hood or Browning, are of course part of his more attractive stock-in-trade. There is a well-known Browning metre that he uses in that very early ballad of Calcutta and Simla, *A Tale of Two Cities*, which begins :

Where the sober-coloured cultivator smiles on his *byles* ;  
Where the cholera, the cyclone, and the crow come and go ;  
Where the merchant deals in indigo and tea, Hides and *ghi* ;  
Where the Babu drops inflammatory hints, in his prints.

Thus Browning in *Love Among the Lilies*, "where the quiet-coloured end of evening smiles ; miles on miles". There is also a dramatic monologue in the *Bishop Blougram* style, as well as *Love Among the Ruins*.

There was once a gunner who wrote of his atrocious pieces this :

When the squat and sullen howitzer is quiet and his diet  
Of cordite and of lyddite is at rest in the nest  
Of the limber : and the gunners come and go to and fro, etc.

An easy metre to dabble in.

If you are versed in the matter of song, you will know the difference in verse between "eye-painting" and "ear-painting", and further how for "singing" verse you must often sacrifice the more sonorous and dignified word for the softer. So much of Kipling's verse has been put to song that he obviously wrote both singing metre and singing words.

Couplets Kipling often uses, the heptameter, as in Macaulay's *Ivry*, but often the quatrain and the five-lined stanza. *The Craftsman* is a successful essay in Sapphics, while

there is in *Departmental Ditties*, also, a clever imitation of Swinburne's *Before the Beginning of Years*.

A ballad with triplet verses, all three lines rhyming and closing with the same burden, that does not rhyme, he uses very effectively, thus *Buddha at Kamakura*, and there are eleven of the verses :

To him the Way, the Law, apart,  
Whom *Maya* held beneath her heart,  
Ananda's Lord the Bodhisat,  
The Buddha of Kamakura.

Each of the verses closes with some variation of the fourth line.

But even this does not finish the tally of borrowed metres and styles, for *Departmental Ditties* (from which many, including the Browning pieces and others already quoted, have been taken) are obviously the tally of his early "practice pieces". They show us how his swinging measures and effective methods have only come from prolonged study of the past-masters. Among the Ditties are also two imitations of *Omar Khayyám*, one of Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, and some melodies of Poe's *Raven*.

The *Muse Among the Motors*, which appeared so far back as 1904, consists of fourteen ballads in fourteen different styles, such as Chaucer, Byron, Emerson, Ben Jonson, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Adam Lindsay Gordon, etc. Here is a verse of the Tennyson effort :

To range from Ashby-de-la-Zouch  
By Lyonesse to Locksley Hall,  
Or haply, nearer home, appal  
Thy father's sister's staid Barouche.

All the fourteen deal with some aspect of the then astounding new steam- and petrol-motor phase. The Byron verse shoots at more than one bird. The speed-trap is the leading *motif* in almost all.

Twelve as thirteen my Murray always took—  
He was a publisher. The new Police  
Have neater ways of bringing men to book,  
So Juan found himself before J.P.'s  
Accused of storming through that placid nook  
At almost any pace you please.  
The Dogberry and the Waterbury made  
It fifty mile—five pounds. And Juan paid.

But now let us turn to a very different essay. Kipling writes in the style and metre of Chaucer, surely a *tour de force*. Twice has he used it, once years ago in India, when there was a scandal over university examinations. It is called *An Excellent Reason*.

In farthest Inde, by Ancient Ravi's shore  
 A cyte stondes—that cyte hight Lahore  
 Thereinne thou mayst behold as I yon say  
 A verray famous Univers-itye.  
 Vareys its hodes and gownes of hues rare  
 Cannete-brigge self therewith compare  
 Oxenford's robes, should they thereinne be sene  
 You would not recke at more than an old hene.

Then there comes in this style also the yarn of the young man who sat on the type that was printing the exam. papers, having asked to beshown the printing-press ('Chopper Corner'<sup>1</sup>).

The Lytel Ladde (hys name I mote not telle)  
 On ye wet type a-swounding, backwards felle  
 So hath he gayned (he gayneth who-so seekes)  
 The questions all y-printed on his breekes.

Yea copies did he make, and eke did selle  
 Himself did passe, and profitte made as welle  
 Then sped throughouten Ynde his hie renowne.

All over India flew the tale, and the device became more than popular, as it would, when even today we see a tutor run in for helping his pupil.

The second attempt years later came from *The Muse Among the Motors*, entitled *The Justice's Tale* :

With them there rode a lustie Engineere  
 Wel skilled to handel everich waie her geore,  
 Hee was soe wise no man colde showe him aught  
 And out of Paris was hys learynge brought.

For simple people and for lordlings eke  
 Hee wolde not bate a del but on-lie squeeke.

Thus many were the variations of the metre in which he sang, and that the art was early in him, know by reading these two verses from the *Scribbler*, a small family paper got up by younger members of the Burne-Jones and William Morris family. This was in 1878, when Kipling was thirteen, a year after he went to Westward Ho, and is "uncollected". The first piece bore his *nom de guerre* "Nickson" and was entitled *Job's Wife*.

Curse now thy God and die, for all is done.  
 Thy bitter cup is fillèd to the brim.  
 In all mankind there liveth not a one  
 That careth for thee. What art thou to him ?

And what is life in that thou leavest it  
 As though it were a friend ? Death's sleep is long.  
 Wilt thou not taste of Lethe and be strong ?

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<sup>1</sup> I.e. *Chappar Khana*—printing-house.



In the *Scribbler* once more appeared a really powerful poem of the small boy's—this time "collected" by his father in *Schoolboy Lyrics* published in 1881. It describes the last night of a felon awaiting execution, and is entitled *The Night Before*. It is a powerful attempt even for an adult, but *he* was a boy of thirteen !

The felon soliloquizes :

### THE NIGHT BEFORE

I sneered when I heard the old priest complain  
That the doomed are voiceless and are dull of brain.  
For why should a felon be other than dumb  
As he stands at the Gate of the World to come ?  
The tick-tock  
Of the great Jail Clock  
Is more to me than the holiest prayer  
That ever was mingled with dungeon air.

Will it never be dawn in the cold, grey skies,  
The great red sun, will he never arise,  
Thrusting his rays in my iron-barred cell  
And lighting the city I know so well ?

At last the blackness is melting away  
In the corpse-like night on the face of the day.  
I hear the carts, in the streets once more,  
And the Sheriff's step on the stony floor.

### *The Parodists*

When an emphatic ballad-maker and story-writer appears with new metres and new lilt and a new technique he is naturally the prey of the parodists, from the kindly, foreseeing *Punch* to the less effective scribbler who parodies from meanness and mis-faith.

Kipling has been often parodied and perverted to good and poor purpose, as we often parody the White Knight. *If* is, of course, readily turned to local colour, as has occurred when Eamon de Valera happened to use a quotation therefrom to defend himself, a quotation of which Kipling might have said, "Damn his cheek," as he said, when years ago he lay ill in the States and the Kaiser wired inquiries. "Damn his impertinence" ; but then Kipling knew his Kaiser better than most of the world.

Two papers have left us, in the march of time, without which England is poorer. One the real *Pink 'Un*, which scalded in

clever obscenity those who broke the canons of honour and morality, and the *Saturday Westminster* that carried all cultured humanity in its train. The whimsical literary competitions that appeared each week in the latter were often remarkable, as were the solutions. One of them is worth reproducing here as showing how at one time the Kipling technique did rightly admit some gentle fun-poking.

The problem set in that delicate green-hued journal was this—to sing the *Song of Sixpence* in the style and metre of Kipling, Byron, and Chaucer, and this was the winner so far as our master is concerned :

THE SONG OF THE TANNER  
(After Rudyard Kipling)

*When the rye runs over the pocket,  
As the oout of a hazar-kel,  
Give ear, my people, and listen  
To the story the people tell :  
The Song of Sixpence the Tanner—  
A song that ye know full well.*

Nine are the Laws of the Hedgerow  
That Mavis, the Song Thrush, wrote ;  
For blackbirds baked in a piecrust  
This is the law they quote :  
That the blackbird nearest the egg-cup  
Is the one that shall give the note.

The soul of the King was hungered,  
And out he spake in his wrath :  
"Ye have searched to the East for blackbirds,  
Go, search ye again to the North.  
Go, search till ye find two dozen."  
. . . And the Word of the King went forth.

Twenty and four were the blackbirds—  
Somebody cut the crust ;  
And out of the thick'ning gravy  
Each little beak was thrust.  
Twenty and four were the voices . . .  
*And the soul of the King was dust !*

That is true parody and far superior to that mere copying of style and *motif* that usually passes for such. The lines "That the blackbird nearest the egg-cup is the one that shall give the note", touch something of the lyrical motive that once was the Kipling way.

The ode by Edgar Wallace sent to the *Cape Times* when Kipling went to South Africa in 1898 is perhaps the most famous of the parodies written when that writer was a young

journalist. It won him Kipling's friendship and encouragement. It was republished in Edgar Wallace's book of verse *Writ in Barracks*, published by Methuen in 1900.

TOMMY TO HIS LAUREATE  
(Cape Town, January 25, 1898)

O Good mornin', Mr. Kiplin' ; You are welcome to our shores,  
To the land of millionaires and potted meat,  
To the country of the "fontains" (we 'ave no "bads" or "pores")  
To the place where di'monds lay about the street, at your feet,  
To the 'unting-ground of raiders indiscreet.

Which, while very fair parody, is very good fun.

But there is one parody which is a forgery, and is worth giving here not only for the amazing cheek of poking fun at both *The Times* and Kipling, but also for the appositeness of the stuff. It was sent to *The Times* signed "Rudyard Kipling, Burwash", entitled *The Old Volunteer*, and appeared on May 17, 1918. *The Times* published an apology the next day, saying, however, that they had compared the signature with a genuine one in their possession, and that it had seemed all right.

I can hear the bugle calling,  
And it don't want me,  
While the superannuation chap o' Germany  
's a-fighting for the Kaiser in  
His own homeland ;  
But our order's for the Young 'uns  
O' the old Brass Band.

There was little wrong with the sentiment in some sore heart.

We were ready in the 'nineties  
When the call rang clear  
For the yeoman and the gentleman  
To volunteer.

. . . . .  
But the Army wants recruits,  
Not the old Free Will.

It was not Kipling, but it has something of the Kipling ring and sentiment. In *Something of Myself*, he waxes wrath over it.

### *Kipling's Women*

Reference has been made to an absurd belief, still current in France, where his work is so much admired, that Kipling was less successful in his portrayal of women. But a very little study should suffice to show us how intimate, on the contrary, is his knowledge, how deep is his sympathy and how genuine is his admiration. Nothing mean or unsavoury comes

from his pen, and his women are all portrayed to show the female in all her staunchness. He recognizes that men and women are one in the weft of the world, and that the gift of a woman's support is a supreme one. In nearly all his female characters they are sharing the burden of the active life in far-away lands, they are the wives and sweethearts of magistrates, of engineers, of soldiers and officers.

Whether he writes of simple lives, of she who lost her place in heaven for the glamour of the sword, of the cats all grey in the dark, of those who on honey-dew have fed and drunk the milk of paradise, they are dealt with in admiration and understanding and in decency withal. The young woman of today he never found time to write about, or he would have seen how great and how staunch she can be in all the ways of life and yet into what terrible messes and heart-breaks her freedom too often leads her. It is a loss to the modern world that he could not, or cared not, to tackle a fresh canvas.

Yet those women he does treat of stand before us always. What man does not dream of such a Miriam as the Brushwood girl, the Brushwood girl, too, in a bathing-suit? Or who could not but thrill to Mulvaney's description of Dinah Shadd when a lass, long years before she became the kindly barrack wife of later days? Mulvaney is telling Dinah that he cares for her, he that had been fighting for her with another suitor.

"'I wasn't worth ut,' sez she, fingering her apron. 'That's for me to say,' sez I. 'Shall I say ut?'"

"'Yes,' says she in a saint's whisper. . . ."

A saint's whisper!—that so many of us know and aren't worth. No one has ever used a more beautiful phrase.

Nor is it of the young and beautiful that he must write. The old lady in *Kim*, Mary Postgate, finding the dying German airman, after seeing the child that his bombs have killed, the woman who took parties to the graves of France, all are pregnant with understanding; and the dying girl in the country-house in Sussex when Arthur Wellesley was a young general touches the very *lacrimae rerum*.

The idea that Kipling could not portray a woman was born of the somewhat Puritan disdain of the home-grown Victorian for the characters in *Plain Tales from the Hills*, when it was the fashion to call him the "prophet of adultery". Short stories were new things, and folk hardly realized that a story in six thousand words needed characters of some forcefulness. The nice kind lady who, as George Robey used to say, could be left on a chair in the park and be found waiting for you an

hour later, never made a short story, though she might have emotions that could expand into a long one, a three-decker for choice.

Mrs. Hauksbee, entirely adorable really, if rather sharp of tongue, was anathema to the folk of the 'eighties. Now we know her as a charming sketch of a brilliant little lady whose partnership was always worth while. In circles where sewing-parties were the chief amusement, Mrs. Cusack Bremil rescuing her husband from Mrs. Hauksbee, cutting him out from under the wings of a privateer, was not acceptable; not even Mrs. Hauksbee rescuing Pluffles from Mrs. Reiver. All such were of the evil and worthless butterfly world.

To us who have eaten more widely of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil they are brilliantly drawn little sketches, neither particularly worthy nor unworthy of a society we used to know when all the world was young.

*Lisbeth of the Mission* was a pretty enough little story that poked perhaps a little fun at the mission theory, and a sad little story without any harm in it, of a hill maid who blossomed later on in her own soil into the Woman of Shamlegh, in a polyandrous community. But, indeed, Kipling's Indian women are even more striking and quite as attractive as those of the West, and this brings us to the point that his Women of the West should be studied quite apart from his Women of the East, and both will be studied herein.

### *Chronology of the Passing Years*

In *Rudyard Kipling's Verse (Inclusive Edition)*, the ballads and verses are arranged to a great extent chronologically, and from them, as from the cartoons of *Punch*, it is possible to follow the story of the last fifty years in the British Empire. The prose is not at present so arranged, save that to a considerable extent the collected stories in each small book do represent the work written and collected since its predecessor appeared. Some exceptions to the chronological sequence are caused by author or editor finding they are a story or two short for the purpose of a volume, and rummaging among unpublished manuscripts for some story that is good enough to add to the store. This means that an earlier Mulvaney or Strickland story appears among matter of a later date and theme. Thus, *The Debt* in *Limits and Renewals*, and *A Deal in Cotton* in *Actions and Reactions*, the former a Strickland story, and also several of the Stalky trio.

But in any case the themes of the stories mark the chronology of his long literary reign, from the Afghan Wars to Burma, to

the Sudan, to South Africa, and thence to the great and terrible World War.

Let us then watch the march of time on the Kipling chronometer, leaving for a moment the consideration of stories as feats of mere presentment, but taking story and verse as entries in Britain's log. It is in the verse written after the days when Adams wrote of the small output then extant that we can really see the history of England. In this connection the verse touches history in two different ways. First, the verses dealing with historical subjects, which is not what we are referring to here, and secondly those that deal with matters of English happenings that have become history which were in progress when the verse came hot from the press.

In the first is such verse as *The Roman Centurion's Song*, or *The Reeds of Runnymede*, charming, nay, stirring, but dealing with a dead past. The other category deals with our living history. It might be said to begin with *One Viceroy Resigns*, definitely descriptive of Lord Dufferin and Lord Lansdowne and their entourage, and the episodes with which the former had been so intimately connected. It also gives side-lights on some of the Indian problems, not as in the *Rupaiyat of Omar Kelvin* (Colvin, Finance Minister), which was a little local fun-poking of the young journalist, but as a definite history-telling ballad. Dufferin speaks :

I took a country twice the size of France,<sup>1</sup>  
And shuttered up one doorway in the North.<sup>2</sup>  
I stand by those. You'll find that both will pay.

And goes on :

I'm old, but I shall live till Burma pays :  
Men there—not German traders, Cr-sthw-te<sup>3</sup> knows.

Here too is fun poked at the Indian Civil Servant, and that astounding middle-class that is the nation's strength :

Here's their ground. They fight  
Until the Middle Classes take them back,  
One of ten million plus a C.S.I.  
Or drop in harness. Legion of the Lost ?  
Not altogether. Earnest narrow men,  
But chiefly earnest, and they'll do your work.

. . . Look to one  
I work with him . . . the smallest of them all,  
White-haired, red-faced, who sat the plunging horse  
Out in the garden. He's your right-hand man, dreams  
Of tipping W-ls-y from the throne

<sup>1</sup> Burma.

<sup>2</sup> Quetta.

<sup>3</sup> Sir Charles Crosthwaite, Chief Commissioner of Burma.

And while he dreams gives work we cannot buy;  
 He has his Reputation . . . Wants the Lords—  
 By way of Frontier Roads. Meantime, I think,  
 He values very much the hand that falls  
 Upon his shoulder at the Council Table . . .  
 Hates cats and knows his business.

A shrewd and kindly description of the great Lord Roberts of glorious memory, and sheer local colour as well as Empire story. Adams called it poor blank verse, but *his* end was more than sad. To most critics as well as admirers it seems some of Kipling's best.

The greater gaps in his Pyramid inches and the ascending passage are treated of in "Great Occasions" below. But there are many lesser ones, valuable some day to the historian, which, beginning with the earlier Indian happenings, run right through his prose and verse. The stories of various wars are referred to under those headings; but let us see now the many lesser incidents that come casually as the singer passes. Politics are often treated of, such as the Irish incidents and the Ulster infamy of 1914, also dealt with more suitably as "Great Occasions". "*Cleared*" comes very soon after his return to England, and deals with such ancient history as the Parnell Commission and the dirty fingers of many politicians—not only Irish ones.

If black is black, or white is white, in black and white it's down,  
 You're only traitors to the Queen and rebels to the Crown.  
 If print is print or words are words, the learned Court perpend,  
 We are not ruled by murderers, but only—by their friends.

*The Truce of the Bear*, though dealing with a man whose face has been torn by a bear, and treated of as a true Simla story under "Origins" (Chapter IV), also contains a very pregnant allegory. It was published in 1898, at the time of one of the recurrent Russian occasions:

When he veils the hate and cunning of the little, swinish eyes.

Over and over the story, ending as he began:  
 There is no truce with Adam-zad, the Bear that looks like a man!

*Pharaoh and the Sergeant* and *Kitchener's School* have been referred to elsewhere; they are strictly dated for historical reference. *The Burial* dealt of the laying to rest of Cecil Rhodes in the Matoppos (April 10, 1902).

Living he was the land, and dead, his soul shall be her soul.

A great servant of his country with vision unbounded. *The Reformers* sang of "Doctor Jim" and the unfortunate raid and the sealed lips. Though there is little in the ode to date it, yet

it is no secret that *If*, the world's stimulant and promise, was first written to paint the character of that said Doctor.

Most of the verses of the Great War are referred to in the chapter thereon, but here is one marking the epoch—and obviously in continuation of that just quoted from in *The City of Brass*—which says :

They disbanded in face of their foeman  
Their bowmen and archers.

It is called *Natural Theology*, and it deals with the over-fed golf-playing city "cit", who had refused to listen or to think. He has been caught up in the horror he would not face, but worse than the good Mr. Baldwin, to whom Fate showed a precipice in time :

Money spent on an Army or Fleet is homicidal lunacy . . .  
My son has been killed in the Mons retreat.

Why is the Lord afflicting me ?  
I will write to *The Times* deriding our parson  
Because my God has afflicted me.

And there came the answer :

Thou art delivered to thy own keeping.  
Only Thyself hath afflicted thee !

That will tell posterity how near we came to crashing . . . those days when hot-air-dom so prevailed in Merrie England . . . a very Prince of Milestones this !

Among the milestones, too, just as Zinovief and Co. have ridden the tumbril's road, and Adolf Hitler and Walter Citrine have denounced Bolshevism and all its works—also quoted elsewhere herein—the opening lines of *Russia to the Pacifists*, published in 1918, is very apposite :

God rest you, peaceful gentlemen, but give us leave to pass.  
We go to dig a nation's grave, as great as England was.

The march of the milestones in Kipling compares with those Knatchbull Huegesson stories in the days of long ago.

### *Kipling and Great Occasions*

It has often been remarked that Kipling, more than any of modern poets and balladists, would have graced the post of Laureate. But that in itself postulates some misunderstanding of the purpose of that office. It is no essential part of Laureatecy to write odes to great occasions like the hereditary bard of some Highland chief or Rajput prince. Tennyson, it is true, made it so, but only *pari passu* with his great role as a master of poesy.



Kipling's genius was wider and less recondite and cultured. But if the qualification for the Laureate was the power of writing verse to great occasions, no one has ever equalled Kipling, not even Tennyson's ode to the Princess Alexandra :

Norman and Saxon and Dane are we,  
But most especially Dane to thee

—or his thunder of the Six Hundred. Kipling has graced many great occasions in a manner peculiarly his own.

Many will remember *The Dead King* when Edward VII passed to his rest—that long, powerful song of glory and sympathy that began :

*Who in the realm today lays down dear life for the sake of a land more dear?*

—and which traced the influence that had been his long before the throne called him :

The Councils of Kings called in haste to learn how he was minded—  
The Kingdoms, the Powers and the Glories he dealt with unblinded.

These were the works of our King ; Earth's peace is the proof of them.  
God gave him great works to fulfil, and to us the behoof of them.

All that Kings covet was his, and he flung it aside for us,  
Simply as any that die in his service he died for us.

On great occasions he sung great deeds and things, and in missing the death of King George it has been said, not ungracefully, that King George "took his trumpeter with him".

With the ode *The Dead King* goes the story *In the Presence*, told—as he sets it—round the hearth in an Indian village—a favourite way of presentment—of the long vigil of certain of the King's Indian orderly officers round the body that lay in state while others were absent on special service.

This story was brought back to us in its homage a hundred-fold when we saw that astounding scene of King George's sons mounting guard on their father's lying-in-state on the night before his funeral.

*Recessional*, being now enshrined among our hymns, will probably never be lost, and needs no quoting here.

It is interesting to remember that it was printed in *The Times* so far back as July 17, 1897, when Kitchener had at last destroyed the foulness of the Khalifa—before the War of Liberation in South Africa even. It was written to curb the paeans of the Press, and as its genesis was the subject of many legends the true story appeared in *Literature*, April 13, 1901, in

a little article which printed in full the letter R. K. sent enclosing it to *The Times*, which ran thus :

"Dear ———,

"Enclosed please find my sentiments on things—which I hope are yours. We've been blowing up the trumpets of the new moon a little too much for white men,<sup>1</sup> and it is about time we sobered down. If you would like it, it is at your service—on the old conditions that I am free to use it, if I want it later, in book-form. The sooner it is printed the better. I don't want any proofs. Couldn't you use it tonight, so as to end the week piously? If it's not your line please drop me a wire.

"Yours sincerely,  
"R. K."

(The poem was published the next morning. Mr. Kipling was asked to name his own price, but absolutely declined all payment.)

The outbreak of the South African War was marked by the appearance of *The Absent-minded Beggar*, to help the appeal for funds for the families of the soldiers at the front, especially wives "off the strength".

Perhaps one of the greatest of our crises was the extraordinary attempt of a Liberal Government to coerce Ulster when the whole consensus of all opinion that mattered was, "Ulster will fight, and Ulster will be right." An egregious Government made their unpolitical Army and Navy for the nonce wildly political, and almost tore the Services in pieces. One great claim on our gratitude to William Hohenzollern is that he restored the homogeneity to the Services, and also wiped off the slate of memory the policy of government and the agony of Army and Navy. What Kipling thought of it, and how he voiced the opinion of all who mattered in a virile England, is to be read in *Ulster* (April 9, 1912),<sup>2</sup> and *The Covenant* (May 20, 1914).<sup>2</sup> His "uncollected" speeches at Tunbridge Wells, reported in *The Times* and *Morning Post* of May 18, 1914, entitled *The Great Bargain and the Ulster Plots*, sang the same staunch song, for of all things Kipling loathed traitors and all those who in the guise of ultra-Liberalism would sell their country's soul.

What answer from the North  
One Law, one land, one throne.  
If England drives us forth  
We shall not fall alone.

<sup>1</sup> By "white men", Kipling meant those who do their duty without vaunting, and keep in bounds with all men.

<sup>2</sup> Both "collected" in *Inclusive Verse*.

It took the major crisis of 1914 to turn our thoughts elsewhere, and it was then that Kipling's "*For All We Have and Are*" appeared—a song of songs :

For all we have and are,  
For all our children's fate,  
Stand up and take the war,  
The Hun is at the gate!

Though all we made depart,  
The old Commandments stand :—  
"In patience keep your heart,  
In strength lift up your hand."

Some of the many lesser occasions of which Kipling sang make up the chronology of Empire happenings just referred to. One more drama belongs to his songs of great occasions—the death of the wonderful old Field-Marshal Earl Roberts after his visit to his Indian troops in the line in their cruel winter experience of 1914-15 :

He passed in the very battle-smoke,  
Of the war that he had descried.  
Three hundred miles of cannon spoke  
When the Master-Gunner died.

Never again the war-wise face,  
The weighed and urgent word  
That pleaded in the market-place—  
Pleaded and was not heard!

Since the generations pass and do not remember, let it be said first that Lord Roberts held the honoured Household Appointment of "Master Gunner of St. James's", usually held by the Senior Colonel Commandant of the Royal Artillery. Secondly be it realized that Lord Roberts urged on all the need for some measure of military training, foretelling in every market-place the war that was about to fall on us. "The muddled oaf at the goal" who jeered at a war that *would not have come* had we shown to the outer world some martial instinct cost us a million sons.

Yet Lord Roberts asked from us a tenth of what Hitler is taking from his youth amid glory and plaudits.

Twice has Lord Roberts been the subject of Kipling's song. For he—Lord Roberts of Kandahar—was "Bobs" to the Army, and as "Bobs" he is sung of in barrack doggerel :

Oh, 'e's little, but 'e's wise,  
'E's a terror for 'is size.

*The City of Brass* belongs not to great occasions but to pitiful ones. The control of Britain had passed from statesman to opportunist and the men who quail before the imagined tyranny of the ballot-box. Our trivial land force had been still further reduced, despite the increasing loom of the Hun.

Swiftly these pulled down the walls  
That their fathers had made them.

. . . . .

And because there was need of more pay  
For the shouters and marchers,  
They disbanded in face of their foemen,  
Their bowmen and archers.

*The Declaration of London*, carried out by the hot-air merchant in the face of all advice, came two years later (1911). So false was it that it had to be repudiated in 1914, and at the time Kipling wrote :

Our ears still carry the sound of our once Imperial Seas

. . . . .

It is too early to have them bound or sold at your decrees.

And it very soon proved to be.

The War occasions are dealt with in Chapter XVII. Another great occasion was the Pageant of Parliament that took place in the Albert Hall on June 29, 1934, for which Kipling composed two odes. The first was recited during the Elizabethan episode and is to the glory of those brilliant young men who founded our Empire and our sea power.

Fate and their foemen proved them,  
Above all need of praise.  
And Gloriana loved them,  
And Shakespeare wrote them plays.

The second, *Non Nobis Domine*, sometimes spoken of as the Second Recessional, was sung by two hundred choristers, to the setting of Mr. Roger Quilter, in the "1934" episode.

*Non Nobis Domine*  
Nor unto us O Lord  
The praise and glory be  
Of any deed or word.

. . . . .

O Power by whom we live,  
Creator, Judge and Friend,  
Upholdingly forgive,  
Nor leave us at the end.

But an even greater occasion was King George's Jubilee and Kipling's ode *To the King and the Sea*,<sup>1</sup> as the Empire resounded with sympathy and homage, which began, as we all remember :

After his Realms and States were moved  
To bare their hearts to the King they loved,  
Tendering themselves in homage and devotion,  
The Tide-wave up the channel spoke  
To all those eager exultant folk  
*Hear now what man was given you by the Ocean.*

All the shaping of character by life and command at sea is recorded :

There was no thought of Orb or Crown  
When the single wooden chest went down.

Thus I schooled him to go and come—  
To speak at the word—at a word be dumb.

I loosened every mood of the deep  
On him, a child, and sick for sleep.

I showed him worth by folly concealed  
And the flaw in the soul that the chance revealed.

I dealt him power beneath his hand  
In trial and proof with his first command.

Wherefore when he came to be Crowned  
Strength in Duty, held him bound.

The country can hardly yet realize what it has lost since this recorder of great occasions and scarifier of mean ones has gone from our midst.

In arranging these very excerpts it seemed but natural to turn to see what he had written of the passing of King George and the accession of King Edward VIII—and then I remembered.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Times*, July 17, 1935.

## CHAPTER IV

### SOME KIPLING ORIGINS

Terence Mulvaney—Fort Amara—Snarleyow—The Mother Lodge and *The Man Who Would be a King*—The Truce of the Bear—Mahbub Ali—Mother Maturin—*Danny Deevers*—*Kim*—*The Jacket*.

#### *Terence Mulvaney*

It has been my happy lot to soldier for thirty-seven years, and to spend twenty-five of that time covering the length and breadth of India and Burma, sometimes at the head of a party of mounted infantry, sometimes on the mountain-side 'along of my old brown mule', sometimes at the head of a battery of field artillery, lately as the Quartermaster-General of the Army. When I first went out to the Shiny East, the earlier stories of Rudyard Kipling were just appearing in volume form, to the huge delight of the Services: *Plain Tales from the Hills*, *Wee Willie Winkie*, and the like, and they at once stirred my imagination to look at and enjoy all that the East could show me.

It has since been my pleasure to look for the origins of these wonderful stories, and sometimes I have found them in simple places and sometimes in tortuous ways. The old soldier in those early days in the Army had not quite disappeared, and a few were still to be seen . . . not many, but sufficient of the Mulvaney type to show how true the study was to nature. The whole British Army in the first half of the nineteenth century was full of Irishry. The European troops of the Honourable East India Company were almost entirely drawn from the Emerald Isle, as witness the names on the battle-memorials at Ferozeshuhr, Chillianwallah and Delhi, and hence that delightful story of Namgay Doolah, the offspring of an Irish soldier married to a hill girl of the Himalaya, the shrine with the old shako, and the wreath of marigolds, and the perverted folk-song that once was *The Wearin' o' the Green*, just referred to.

There lived in Solon near Simla in the 'eighties, and on into the 'nineties, one Quartermaster-sergeant Bancroft of the Bengal Horse Artillery, of the old army of John Company. From him and his reminiscences, printed privately about the time of Queen Victoria's Jubilee, Kipling was to get a considerable portion of his Mulvaney, and the whole story of

Snarleyow, a troop-horse in G Troop, 2nd Brigade, in which Bancroft was a gunner.

Listen to his stories of the wisdom of Gunner Terence O'Shaughnessy and you will see where Terence Mulvaney got his knowledge of women. This old soldier in the same troop discourses to young Bancroft of the families of the troops away up in Kabul in 1840, who have been left behind at the then populous cantonment of Kurnaul, now abandoned, who had been waiting for a couple of years for their men to return, and are restive :

"And the natural consiquins is that thim that know their husband is dead, wants to git anither, then again thim grass widdys isn't partiklar, thim anshint ould maids is av the same opinion wid thim, and as for the young crathurs, why av coorse they want to sail in the same boat, begorra Kurnaul's a grate place for a tinder-harted yuth like me."

There is Dinah Shadd and old Pummeloe and "McKenna me man" standing in the life from Bancroft's colour-box for the artist to make his inimitable pictures. It was in Bancroft's troop, too, that the incident of Snarleyow occurred, a veritable true story.

That soft Irish accent seems to be gone from the world, banished perhaps by the green pillar-boxes, although I ran into it the other day nevertheless. A tall, soldierly figure stopped me. "I beg your pardon, sorr ; but Oi'm just out of Lewes jail."

"Now, what have you been doing to get into Lewes jail, old soldier ?" I queried.

"The very same thing as Oi'm doing now, sorr—begging in the shstreets."

Was ever a matter of importance hinted at more neatly ? It was the voice of Mulvaney who "was a corporal wanst" come down . . . down to tramping the roads and begging for the love of God. The old professional soldier hard put to it is such an old story that even the writer of Ecclesiasticus—the wisdom of Ben Sirach—must write of it : "There are three things that grieve me, and the fourth maketh my heart sad, and the first is a man of war that is in poverty. . . ." Shade of Nellie Gwynne ! In the sonorous inscription above the Colonnade at the Royal Hospital at Chelsea it is written thus : "*In subsidium et levamen, senio belloque fractorum*" . . . broken by old age and the wars. And then my Mulvaney friend went on : "Did iver ye meet the Wilch Rigimint, sorr ? We were all Irishmen and Wilshmen, glory be to God ! A foine corps, sorr !" !

There was a poem appeared years ago in the Lahore paper

the *Civil and Military Gazette*, on the staff of which Kipling then was, which has never been reprinted in any of his collected verse. It described the Lieutenant-Governor's levée at the capital of the Punjab as seen by the Irish sentry at the door. If I do not misremember, a fragment ran thus, but I've forgotten the rest :

Oh, the dignity and the moild benignity  
Whin the Hoigh Coort judges tuk the floor,  
And the Shubedars wid their midals and shtars  
Stud up to attinshun foreninst the door.

Then I met Mulvaney once again in Central India, in that old-world cantonment of Saugor. Sitting in my bungalow one hot-weather day, my bearer brought me in a dirty card on which was inscribed "Mr. Patrick Doyle".

"Will you come in, Mr. Doyle?"

"Oi will, sorr." And in came a thin, soldierly figure, resembling my friend of Lewes jail, in a thin grey cotton suit. Three medal ribbons were sewn on his coat, and the last was that for the Mutiny; the others, the Gwalior ribbon and that for the Second Sikh War. Mr. Doyle sat down and wiped his forehead.

"It's a long toime since Oi was here, sorr! It was in Jim Turnbull's troop of Bombay Harse Artillery in the Mutiny toime in 'fifty-eight. Did you know Captain Jim Turnbull, sorr?" Now, as this was 1903, and he was talking of 1858, it happened that I did not, and then he told me stories of the conversion of the Bombay Horse Artillery to Royal Artillery in 1859, and how Jim Turnbull would have none of it, and how now he was on his way to "Kilmainham, the ould soldiers' home".

Mr. Kitchener—him that was brother to the Commander-in-Chief (viz. Walter K.)—had sent him there, for, "Oi'm an ould man, sorr, and at Umballa the judge's lady came to see me in hospital, and she said, 'Go home to Doblin, ould man, for you've bin in India longer than me and God knows that's long enough, so Oi'm on me way now, sorr. At Allahabad in the Boer War I saw the officer commanding the battery and said I heard the Quane wanted her ould soldiers. He laughed at me, sorr, and said to the sergeant-major, 'Take him away, and give him a hundred rupees from the canteen fund, for he's an ould soldier than you or me.' " And so on in that soft Irish accent that was a pleasure to listen to in its soothe and coax. Is it to be wondered that Kipling saw the story, and the service and the pathos, and made it all live in the person of Terence Mulvaney?



*Fort Amara*

Many of the stories of the Three Soldiers are told round Fort Amara, the guard-room of what in reality is the old fortress of the Kings of Delhi which frowns high over the great city of Lahore ; the fortress inside which the Mogul emperors of Delhi, the last of the thousand years of Turkish dynasties in India, built their spring palace. It would be used in the months of March, April and May, in their yearly migration from Agra to Delhi, and Delhi to Lahore, and Lahore to Kashmir, which began in January and ended in June, bringing their northern provinces into complete review as they moved from one palace-fortress to another. These Turkish emperors built their palaces in the same style at each of their centres and in Kashmir, fountains and cascades, avenues of cypress, a Hall of Public and a Hall of Private Audience, a pattern as sealed as the Roman Forum. Opposite the guard-room in Fort Amara stood, within a stone's-throw, these graceful buildings, with grills and terraces of marble, inlaid with jasper and lapis lazuli and red cornelian, partly picked out by the rude soldiers of the Sikh period.

Here the master-gunner tended the big guns that frown on the city from the high interior plinth, which were once in my charge ; and here overhanging the wall were the barracks in which the company of British infantry from the Mian Mir cantonment spent a dreary month of guard duty in turn.

Here Mulvaney and Learoyd and Ortheris chewed the cud of discontent through a sweltering summer month, when the heat-haze had hidden in pea-soup the view of the Pir Punjal which in winter furnishes so beautiful a sight to those who climb to the high battlements of Fort Amara (which is not its real name). Out to those high battlements Kipling himself would drive in a *tikka garri*, *anglice* hired phaeton, from his irksome editorial chair in the *Civil and Military Gazette* office. It was to that office there came also one summer night Peachy Carnehan and Daniel Dravot, looking for a map of the country of Kafiristan, that land of romance some of whose valleys Sir George Scott-Robinson has since explored and dispelled the legends of an Alexandrine colony marooned in the far mountains of Ao Safai.

*Snarleyow*

In Quartermaster-sergeant Bancroft's pamphlet, to which I have already referred, comes also the story of Snarleyow . . . that was the horse's real name . . . Snarleyow,<sup>1</sup> the artillery

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<sup>1</sup> Obviously from Captain Marryat !

draught-horse whose tragedy is so inimitably told in the ballad of that name. You will remember the refrain :

Down in the Infantry, nobody cares;  
Down in the Cavalry, Colonel 'ee swears;  
But down in the lead with the wheel at the flog  
Turns the bold Bombardier to a little whipped dog!

That third line means when the lead-horses and driver of a gun-team are down, and the pace has been so fast that the wheel-driver is flogging his horses. Now that close on a million Britons have served in the Royal Artillery during the Great War, guns and gun-horses are household words. Here is the story, as told in the song, of the battery moving into action at a gallop :

. . . They were tucking down the brow,  
When a tricky, trundlin' roundshot give the knock to *Snarleyow*.

. . . . .  
They cut 'im loose an' left 'im . . . 'e was almost tore in two,  
But he tried to follow after as a well-trained 'orse should do,  
'E went and fouled the limber, an' the Driver's Brother squeals:  
"Pull up, Pull up for *Snarleyow* . . . 'is head's between 'is 'eels!"

Then it will be remembered that the driver would not pull up :

"There ain't no 'Stop conductor!' when a batt'ry's changin' ground,"  
and he swore that he could not even pull up for his brother with *his* head between his heels. A shell burst over the limber wheels and

There lay the Driver's Brother with 'is 'ead between 'is 'eels.

Now, *Snarleyow* was a real horse, the off pole-horse—or, as we should now say, the off wheel-horse—of the wagon of No. 5 gun in the 1st Troop, 2nd Brigade of the Bengal Horse Artillery (a battery of horse artillery being then called a troop), that magnificent service of the East India Company's immortal Army, which took part in the Battle of Ferozeshuhr fought in the First Sikh War on February 21-22, 1846. It was the battle in which the Governor-General, as well as the Commander-in-Chief, spent the night not only on the field of battle but in the middle of the dead and dying, the roar of the Sikh artillery, and the blaze of the burning Sikh camps, wondering what the morning would bring forth. The Governor-General's staff had mostly been killed, and the Governor-General, Sir Henry Hardinge, had ordered his important

papers to be destroyed. The picture of the "Midnight Bivouac" by Martens is well known.

"Snarley", as he was usually called in the troop, was evidently a holy terror, the sort of horse who would throw himself down and would have to have his bedding lit underneath him before he would rise. Probably a Turcomani horse bought from the father of Mahbub Ali the Afghan horse-dealer in *Kim*, or his like . . . an "entire" horse too, no doubt, which only added to the fun. Bancroft tells the story of how the Horse Artillery were galloping in to close quarters, as they could not, with their light guns, reach from their first position the heavy Sikh metal. He was then a gunner, and seated on the limber of No. 5 wagon, from which he was knocked by a shot. But prior to this a ball had struck the pole-horse of the wagon in the stomach, and in an instant the poor brute's intestines were hanging about its legs.

Bancroft's account runs :

"The writer called to the rider informing him of the mishap in language more plain than refined perhaps, by saying, 'Tom ! Tom ! [The man's name was Tom Connolly] Snarleyow has turned inside out, and his innards are dangling about !' Tom shouted to the corporal leading the team, 'Joe ! Joe ! Pull up ! Snarley's g-ts are hanging about his legs' ; to which request the corporal coolly made answer : 'Begorra, Tom, I would not pull up at such a time if your own g-ts were hanging out !' "

Bancroft also relates how just before this, one gun had halted because the two pole-men, viz. the two gunners seated on the wheel-horses, had been cut in two by a round-shot, the lower halves of their bodies remaining in the saddles.

### *The Mother Lodge and The Man Who Would be a King*

Twice it has been my fortune to come into contact with the Mother Lodge, of which Kipling sings, once as a member of a Lodge next door and once in authority some years later when holding high office in the Craft in the Punjab. They were all there, "Rundle stationmaster", "Ackman of the Commissariat", and Framjee Eduljee, and Uncle Tom Copley and all. Not the same men but the same faces, for types do not change . . . who "met upon the level and parted on the square".

The "Europe Shop" that Framjee Eduljee kept is still there too in the Lahore cantonment which men used to call Mian Mir. I was, as a matter of fact, looking for Sheffield plate in it

only the other day, amid sixty years of junk and truck while Framjee Eduljee's son was taking a very masonic interest in my research, though why I was so interested in the old junk he could not understand.

That drama of dramas *The Man Who Would be a King* is mingled of the legends that were long current of an Alexandrine pocket of Macedonian origin in Kafiristan on the fringe of the Pamirs, and the story of two absentees from a British battalion at Peshawur who started up the Khaiber and were taken to the "Hamir", who wanted to make them Moslems and sent what the men described as "two reverend gents" to expound the faith of Islam. Their story was much talked of in the 'eighties and made good copy at the time.

As treated by Kipling, who has also worked in the legend of ancient bits and pieces of Freemasonry remaining from an older world, it has been placed among the world's master-pieces. It has been dealt with at some length in the next chapter, under "Sources of Power", for its Masonic interest. That Kipling should have conceived the idea of exploiting the legend from the basis of the story that came to him as "copy" from Peshawur is another example of the wide range of his roaming intelligence.

### *The Truce of the Bear*

The horror of Adamzad—which means "born of Adam", or, better, "born of man", since Adam means "man"—the "bear that walks like a man", is a living nightmare that happily I never experienced on the mountain-side. It is the story of the blinded Indian hunter who hesitated to shoot when the old bear stood up and came to him, supplicating.

Horrible hairy, human, with paws like hands in prayer,  
Making his supplication, rose Adam-zad the bear!

But though I never met Adamzad, I came across his trail returning one day from Sipi Fair, the fair in the valley below Mashobra in the hillway behind Simla, when the hill folk make merry for three days and come a-courting. Coming back up the hillside by a short cut to the Lower Forest Road which leads away to Tibet, I heard a whimper, a half-strangled call for pity, as from some beast in a trap. I looked towards the sound and saw, leaning on a staff, a man, or at least I thought it was a man; and then it—for now I saw he was an "it"—coughed a muffled cough and joined its hands and pleaded for alms. There was a man's figure and head—yes, it certainly was a head, a head without a face . . . no nose, no eyes, hardly even an

eye-socket, and a hole like a rotten medlar where the mouth should have been, "flesh like slag in the furnace, knobbed and withered and grey".

I have seen something that reminded me of it since—two Belgian soldiers coming to hospital at Tonbridge in the early days of the War, faces covered in a dirty bandage with two eye-slits only on the surface.

As it whimpered again, my groom, a hillman, said to me, "A bear has done that, *sahib*—an old black bear ; torn his face off with his claws ; a *Kala Balu*." Yes, there it was as Kipling met it years before :

Eyeless, noseless and lipless, asking a dole at the door,  
Matun the old blind beggar, he tells it o'er and o'er.

But this poem also had an allegory as stated on the tortuous ways of Russian diplomacy *vis-à-vis* Afghanistan and India.

### *Mahbub Ali*

If you turn into the Sultan *serai* at Lahore you will pass under an ancient gateway into the particular part of the *serai* or travellers' rest frequented by Afghan traders—horse-traders for choice—where used to sit the sons of Mahbub Ali, the Afghan horse-dealer of *Kim* fame. There were three of them—Wazir Khan, a typical old Afghan, the elder brother, fat old Afzul Khan, and the youngest, Aslam, now the sole survivor. Rows of horses are tethered in the yard or under the arched recesses of the *serai* walls. They used to export the horses of Central Asia, Turcomani, Badakshani and Kandahari, and would again, but for the ruler of Kabul, who of late years has forbidden export. In some pitch-dark stable, perhaps underground, thin horses would be gobbling chopped green food the day long, to put soft, deceptive flesh on their none-too-good bones, getting fat as butter in the process, so that you can hardly feel where the missing rib should be, but may take the fancy of some buyer who likes his horses round. Now and again the Turcomani horses would fight, heels and teeth, till some groom would read the Riot Act, emphasizing his abjurgations with blows from a tent-peg.

But young Aslam, who is now old Aslam, quarrelled with his brothers in the *serai* and split the business, as Mahbub Ali knew he would, and lives elsewhere. Now mark the generations and the process of evolution. Mahbub Ali's father was an honourable Kabuli horse-thief in a gentlemanly way, who had espoused the British fortunes in 1839 in the "great adventure" of those days, which was then called the "great game", no less

an undertaking than the crossings of the foreign Punjab and the penetration of Afghanistan.

When the British left the land, then he left the land too, lest a halter be his guerdon and six feet of Afghan soil his patrimony. Mahbub Ali of *Kim* and his son were horse-dealers of Lahore pure and simple, and purveyed polo ponies to all and sundry, and mules and horses for the cavalry. I once asked Mr. James Daly of Liffey Bank, outside Dublin, if he was a Home Ruler—a foolish question. “Sorr,” said he, “I am a harse-dealer,” and much the same answer would Mahbub Ali have given if you touched on Kabul politics: “*Kabul ki bat mu pucho, sahib*”—“Don’t even ask, sir, of affairs in Kabul.”

Now again watch the process of evolution. Young Aslam sent his son to Cambridge to take a veterinary degree and make a speciality of trading in screws; but the lad did not like a day’s work at the ‘Varsity, and now sits at home in Lahore at ease, en route, as far as horse-dealing goes, from clogs to clogs. Young Aslam, who is now old Aslam, sometimes comes and sees me, and tells me of it sorrowfully and tries to sell the best horse in India, which the remounts had foolishly sold out of the stud, while bemoaning the fallen family of Mahbub Ali.

But in the Sultan *serai*, though none of the sons of Mahbub Ali hold sway, horse-dealers are still in occupation, with the bundles of Bokhara carpets that have come down on camels through the Khaiber, and still the “Persian pussy-cats spit on the bales”. It was in this same *serai* among the Persian pussy-cats and the screaming Turcomanis and the Afghans drinking coffee that MacIntosh Jellaludin, the whiskified objectionable who had once been a fellow of his college, passed away.

### *Mother Maturin*

Some of those who remember the earlier stories and verse may also remember that Kipling has more than once hinted at the wonderful story of Mother Maturin that he would some day tell. In the story of MacIntosh Jellaludin, the whiskified objectionable who had once been a fellow of his college, dying of drink in the Sultan *serai*, it is hinted at, and in other places besides. MacIntosh Jellaludin left some mysterious papers which were said to contain the story with the Indian woman who had been his wife. But in vain have several of us looked and hoped for it, for it promised to be the story of stories. I have, however, ascertained that Mother Maturin kept a questionable house of entertainment for sailors of the South China Seas at Saigong. There is plenty of room for a story of horror and sorrow in such a setting.

*Danny Deeever*

Because I am a soldier it is the soldier and the war stories that have appealed to me—the glory and drama of war, but also the stories of the daily tragedies of Army life in the East, and therefore *Danny Deeever* haunts and intrigues me. Why does Kipling sing of Danny Deeever, who was executed for murdering a comrade? Why does he have this tragedy in his paint-box? Not long before it was written Private Flaxman, of the Leicesters, in '86 or '87 shot the provost sergeant at Ranikhet, the cantonment in the Himalaya.

They are hangin' Danny Deeever,  
They are marchin' of 'im round.

For the murder of a comrade the execution was public, and the condemned man was slow-marched round the line of troops.

They 'ave 'altered Danny Deeever by 'is coffin on the ground.

Two years later the friend of my youth was murdered, also at Ranikhet, a subaltern shot as he sat in his tent by one of his men. One can picture the sour brooding mixed with soaking that had brought such a thing about.

*Kim*

Who was Kim? This has always been a fascinating problem for those who must dot their "i's" and cross their "t's"; but those who understand the mosaic principle will accept the idea that Kipling's boyhood itself supplied some of the pieces played, no doubt, on occasion under the shadow of Zam Zammah, the great Mogul cannon, since his father worked hard by; but they will also know that there are many pieces in the putting together of that inlaid masterpiece. It is generally believed by those who knew Lahore in the early 'eighties that probably a lad who at one time drove an *ekka*,<sup>1</sup> but was helped to better things, was the chief piece in the actual mosaic of Kim himself. There was a sad story behind his family, over which the lad triumphed, and his name need not be mentioned. The shadow of the old Army colours the early glory of the book. There are, as usual, hidden Masonic allusions, this time to some of the higher degrees and mysteries.

*The Jacket*

Kipling makes an excursion to Egypt both in *Fuzzy-Wuzzy* of the later days, and Kitchener's School, but he takes an earlier original in *The Jacket* when

<sup>1</sup> A country pony-cart.

An' the Captain waved a corkscrew in 'is 'and.

'Orse-gunners listen to my song.<sup>1</sup>

This, as all the Royal Regiment used to know, is the story of the "Treasure", a name given to one Dalbiac by his associates of the old *Pink 'Un* staff, of which he too was one, in the days when the *Pink 'Un* was the *Pink 'Un*. Legend, and more than legend, has it that Dalbiac had filled the axle-tree seats of his nine-pounder guns—those seats right and left of the gun on which two gunners cling grimly, and which carried case-shot for use at close quarters—with an assortment of good wine. At a critical moment the gunners were refreshed, and, as Kipling tells the story, thus stimulated, caring for little behind the splinter-bar, as the old way was, galloped their guns into and over the enemy's entrenchments in the mode of Norman Ramsay at Fuentes d'Onoro.

The "Treasure", of whom many stories were told eventually, found the Regiment too limiting in its scope, and left. Alas, poor "Treasure"! He rejoined the Army for the Boer War, led out a squadron of yeomanry, and was killed at Senekal in the Orange Free State, and so would he have had it. To this day, in the Woolwich mess, they will tell you late o' nights how the "Treasure" once invited the whole *Pink 'Un* staff to dine on a guest night, and what ensued, and how in the small hours the tigers walked from the great case upstairs and had to be slain in front of the Dickson monument. *Ay de mi*.

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<sup>1</sup> Kipling told this in prose in *X<sup>2</sup> R.H.A.* in the *St. James's Gazette*.



## CHAPTER V

### SOME SOURCES OF POWER

Sources of Power—Kipling and the Old Testament—Shakespeare and John Webster—Kipling and the Craft—Other Sources.

#### *Sources of Power*

It was once said of a certain great nobleman that he had read only two books in his life, that he knew them by heart, and that he was accounted the best-read man in England. They were the Bible and *Don Quixote*.

Now, Kipling was a voluminous reader, as his work and its sidelights show, yet there is no doubt that a great deal of his literary flair, his dramatic power, and his emphatic and balanced effects come from three great sources. First the Old Testament, second Shakespeare, and third from the legend and stately ritual of that astounding institution within our midst known to its members as the Craft, or in other words Freemasonry, and in this case chiefly "Blue" Masonry.

Those enthusiastic students of Kipling who direct their study now to one facet of his work, now to another, are often concerned in noticing the effect of these three therein, and it will interest both those familiar with these aspects and those who are not if we study this basis of his effects. It may even send some to the Bible and Shakespeare to read of the matter at its fount, since many things that are in the Testaments are often attributed to Shakespeare and sometimes *vice versa*. The numerous and recondite allusions to the Craft can, of course, only be followed by those within that pale, yet the curiosity of non-Masons may make the expounding thereof acceptable and romantic.

#### *Kipling and the Old Testament*

Anyone familiar with Kipling's work cannot but be struck with the remarkable frequency and the way in which Old Testament names, stories, plots and analogies are introduced, always with striking effect. Apart from the glory of the Book itself, Kipling, as a great master of the more expressive English, was a lover of its rhythm and measured phrase.

It has been said that only those who have had to read the Old Testament aloud when young ever get the true cadence of the English tongue into their minds and ears, and that all

writers of good prose have had this training. Since the great scholars of the Authorized Version—the “Book that made England”—wrote at perhaps the best period of the polished language—the “Sanskrit” of Anglo-Saxon—it is not to be wondered at. But since the Testaments, from a literary point of view, contain some of the best “short stories” of the world, there was this reason also for that omnivorous diver into the written word to know the Bible from cover to cover.

When we come to take stock of his use of the Testaments we shall find that that use breaks up into definite compartments. Lest any reader should not be clear about the cadence, what better can be quoted than that last chapter of Ecclesiastes that Kipling would have been familiar with in his Freemasons Lodge, that allegory of old age :

Or ever the silver cord be loosed,  
Or the golden bowl be broken.

Or the less-familiar but even more beautiful lines in the Second Book of Esdras :

Before the fair flowers were seen, or ever the immovable  
powers were established ;  
Before the innumerable multitude of angels were gathered  
together,  
Or ever the heights of the air were lifted up, or ever the  
chimneys in Zion were hot . . .

First and simplest effects of all are the Old Testament titles, and then the analogies. Kipling had long realized that the modernity of the Old Testament was the greatest witness to its accuracy and truth ; for who could scold young women of today better than old Isaiah, who rated the women of Israel for their “stretched-forth necks and their mincing gait, the whimples, and the crisping-pins and the changeable apparel” ? Or what could be more modern and human than the closing remark in that story from Tobit—the story of the young man in trouble, who was to be sent away with his father’s friend to a distant branch of the business in Hamadan that was then Ekbatana—when they came to say good-bye, and “the young man’s dog went with them” ?

Thus the ballad *The Story of Uriah*, which begins, “Jack Barret went to Quetta” ; or *Delilah* (the title of Delilah Aberyst-with the vamp) ; or *The Prodigal Son*, which runs :

Here I come to my own again,  
Fed, forgiven, and known again

I wouldn’t be impolite to you,  
But, brother, you *are* a hound !

*Boanerges Blitzen* and *A Servant When He Reigneth* are but titles for modern themes. *Zion* is an allegory of 1914-18 ; thus, as the Allies grew stronger and stronger,

The door-keepers of Zion,  
They do not always stand,

but disport themselves at times, while

The gatekeepers of Baal,  
They dare not sit or lean.

*Naaman's Song*, that begins "Go wash thyself in Jordan", is but the Old Testament story in powerful verse, while *Rimmon* is also the old story with modern allegory :

To this dead dog for my father's sake  
In Rimmon's House I bow.

A third method is his use of Old Testament phraseology for expressive effect ; in the story of *Private Copper* on the veld, "the sun rose and the rivers ran in their courses", and in that delightful extravaganza *Brugglesmith*, "a good name is a savoury bakemeat". *The Peace of Dives* refers to the evil effect of international finance, while *The Rabbi's Song* is but a metrical version of 2 Samuel xiv.

The references to Adam and Eden are, of course, many, and Kipling is strong on archangels ; in *The Legend of Mirth* are the four :

The four archangels so the legends tell :  
Raphael, Gabriel, Michael, Azrael.

*El*, be it remembered, is the word for God, as in Beth-el, and in *The Hour of the Archangels* we have Ithuriel, which means, I think, "the spear of God".

The Old Testament can be good at invective, and in this Kipling uses it, especially for his terrible poem on the Marconi scandal already quoted.

Whence comest thou, Gehazi ?  
So reverend to behold,  
In scarlet and in ermines  
And chain of England's gold ? . . .

Draw close thy robe and go,  
Gehazi, Judge in Israel,  
A leper white as snow !

also in "*Cleared*", that bitter ballad on the guilt of Irish leaders for the political murders.

And so it goes on : *Jubal and Tubal Cain*, *Jews in Shushan*,

and many another, always powerful and clear in the metaphor, always reverent and cognizant. In *A Truthful Song* the fact that the world never changes is shown when Pharaoh the Great watches the men build flats at the Marble Arch and Noah sees them rigging a barque in Blackwall Basin. In the terrible, dramatic story of a fierce hot season in the Punjab, *At the End of the Passage*, when the engineer Hummil is at breaking-strain and Mottram strums out the latest music-hall airs to ease the tension, Spurstow says to Mottram, "Well done, David!" and the other answers pat, "Look after Saul then."

In *Gentlemen Rankers* "the curse of Reuben holds us", which runs in Genesis xlix, 4. "*Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel.*" Job furnishes phrases that were glued in his mind, for in *The Rhyme of the Three Sealers* we read: "Yea, skin for skin, and, all that he hath a man will give for his life." And again in *The Islanders*, with less sarcasm than in the original, "No doubt but ye are the people."

Proverbs and Ecclesiastes are naturally ready to an ear that can appreciate the cursus of Cicero, so noticeable in the Book of Common Prayer. In *The Ballad of the King's Jest*, in the *Maxims of Hafiz*, they are drawn on, and in *The Long Trail* comes the rendering, more metrical than even the original, of Proverbs xxx, 19:

There be triple ways to take, of the eagle or the snake,  
Or the way of a man with a maid;  
But the sweetest way to me is a ship's upon the sea  
In the heel of the North-East Trade.

In *From Sea to Sea* you are puzzled, perhaps, when Kipling describes deserted Amber in Rajput Jeypore as sister of Patros, Zoan, and No, unless you are familiar with old Ezekiel, the gloomiest of gloomy deans, xxx, 14: "*And I will make Pathros desolate, and will set a fire in Zoan, and will execute judgements in No.*" Amber is also likened to the valley of dry bones in Ezekiel. In that song of marching hypnotism, *Boots*, you hardly expect the Testament, "An' there's no discharge in the War." Yet Ecclesiastes viii, 8, speaking of the combat with sickness and death: "And there is no discharge in that war." Nor do you expect in the *Second-rate Woman* to find holy writ. Yet she says naturally enough: "Stay me with fondants, comfort me with chocolates," the original having "flagons" and "apples" to its line. In *The Peace of Dives*: "Is not Calno like Carchemish?", comes straight from Isaiah.

The Psalms are often drawn on, for "East is East and West is West" is from the Psalm ciii, and in the *Widow at Windsor* Psalm cxxxix is used. In the *Mary Gloster* just quoted is paraphrased

Matthew and Luke, who both say, "For where your treasure is there will your heart be also," and Sir Anthony says, "For the heart it shall go with the treasure—go down to the sea in ships." Psalms cvii and xxiii, and Proverbs v, 15 and 18, are also quoted, all going to the making of his dying will and directions.

In so early a ballad as the *Masque of Plenty*, "How beautiful upon the mountains" comes from Isaiah lii, 7, and the *Imperial Rescript* has it, "The straw might be counted fairly, and the tally of bricks be set."

So, hackneyed or recondite, right through all Kipling's writings, those that have been published in book form and the still larger number that have not, Old Testament language, story and metaphor appear constantly.

Of late years the style of Kipling's stories developed often into subtler and mystical form, and it is the New Testament that gives occasion for his examples, when not the rhythm or the allegory appeal, but some definite part of the Christian verity. Of the influence of iron he writes, in *Cold Iron* :

Here is Bread and here is Wine—sit and sup with me.  
Eat and drink in Mary's name, the whiles I do recall  
How Iron—Cold Iron—can be master of men all !

Look ! These Hands they pierced with nails outside my city wall  
Show Iron—Cold Iron—to be master of men all !

And then for the World War the sad ballad of *Gethsemane* :

The Garden called Gethsemane,  
In Picardy it was,

The Garden called Gethsemane  
It held a pretty lass,  
And all the time she talked to me  
I prayed my cup might pass.

It didn't pass—it didn't pass—  
It didn't pass from me.  
I drank it when we met the gas  
Beyond Gethsemane.

There are two stories of Paul, one *The Manner of Men*, in which sea captains talk at Marseilles in Roman times, one being the skipper of the boat that carried Paul when wrecked at Malta. Many a talk with Paul, the alert, busy, inquiring traveller, had that skipper to tell of. In *The Church that was in Antioch*, Kipling tells of a young Roman who went out to his uncle, the Governor, to be a police-officer and general assistant, throwing himself with zest into the welfare and uplift of some wilder tribes for whom he is responsible.

There is trouble at Antioch in the matter of clean and unclean food, and a trade question for Jewish butchers is mixed up with the religious problem. A Jew boy sings the popular bazaar song on the subject *Pickled Fish*, and amid the riots that ensue the Roman boy magistrate is stabbed and lies a-dying. A friend of his uncle speaks of vengeance; the boy pleads, "They get worked up, they don't know what they are doing." Paulus, who stands by, would baptize the lad there and then; another stops him. "Quiet! Think you that one who has spoken those words needs such as *we* are to certify him to any God?" And the end of the story with the slave-girl touches these very *lacrimae rerum* aforesaid.

These latter two come from *Limits and Renewals*, the last of his books of collected stories, in which also is a set of verses *At His Execution*, when he makes Paulus sing:

I am made all things to all men—  
Hebrew, Roman, and Greek—  
In each one's tongue I speak,  
Suiting to each my word,  
That some may be drawn to the Lord!

I was made all things to all men,  
But now my course is done—  
And now is my reward—  
Ah, Christ, when I stand at Thy throne  
With those I have drawn to the Lord,  
Restore me myself again!

### *Shakespeare and John Webster*

It was not to be expected that the searcher after power would leave his Shakespeare or Webster unexplored, and we have many instances of the use of Shakespearean phrases, of actual quotations and of lines modelled on Shakespearean style; in other instances Shakespeare's thoughts and sayings are translated into the metaphor of Kipling's characters. In the *Courting of Dinah Shadd* Mulvaney says, "Don't fight wid ivry scutt for the pure joy av fightin', but if you do, knock the nose av him first and frequent." It is the principles of strategy and tactics in a nutshell, but Shakespeare says it thus:

Beware of entrance to a quarrel; but, being in,  
Bear 't that the opposed may beware of thee.

In *Watchers of the Night* Kipling would seem to misquote, for he speaks of Shakespeare's allusion to an engineer being shelled by his own battery, but "hoist by his own petard" is probably meant, which means being blown up by his mine.

He quotes again with double effect from *Antony and*

*Cleopatra* in that acme of tragedy '*Love o' Women.*' The culture, the foregone status of the gentleman ranker dying of "locomotus attacks us" (to use Mulvaney's conception)—dying after the "march of death" hand in hand with the cholera out of the Khaiber—comes out as he stands in uncanny strength to greet the woman he has dragged down to hell. He, the scholar, quotes the words of Antony to Cleopatra, given in Mulvaney's brogue: "I'm dyin'—Agypt, dyin'." And she, the educated woman, takes him up, and opens her arm to receive him as he falls. "Die here!" And, Shakespeare or Kipling, even the nether regions must ache with weeping for the tragedy within the story.

Let us look at *Gow's Watch*, which does not perhaps receive the attention it merits, but shows that Kipling might have shone as a playwright. The excerpt is from an imaginary Act II, Scene ii of a play in the manner of John Webster. The scene is set in a pavilion in the garden. Enter Ferdinand and the King. The Prince of whom they talk might be an airman.

FERDINAND: Your tiercel's too long at hack, sir! He's no eyass  
 But a passage hawk that footed ere we caught him,  
 Dangerously free o' the air. Faith, were he mine  
 (As mine's the glove he binds too for his tirings)

Give him the firmament God made him for,  
 And what shall take the air of him?

THE KING: A young wing yet.  
 Bold . . . overbold on the perch, but, think you, Ferdinand,  
 He can endure the raw skies yonder? Cozen  
 Advantage out of the teeth of a hurricane?

He must choose his own mate and ride out tempests, but the king doubted his capacity yet to hold his own in the difficult world.

FERDINAND: I'll answer for him.  
 Bating all parable, I know the Prince.  
 There's a bleak devil in the young, my Lord;  
 God put it there to save 'em from their elders  
 And break their father's heart but bear them scatheless.

. . . Think  
 What our prime saw! Such glory, such achievements.

But what cared we, while we wrought the wonders? Nothing!  
 The rampant dead contented.

THE KING: Little enough, God knows! But afterwards? After . . .  
 There comes the reckoning. I would save him that.

FERDINAND: Save him dry scars that ache of winter nights.

"A' God's name loose him to adventure early!"

And trust some random pike, or half-backed horse,

Besides what's caught in Italy, to save him.

THE KING: I know, I know. And yet . . . What stirs in the garden?

*(Now follows the tragedy, and this is the stage direction.)*

*Enter GOW and a GARDENER bearing the Prince's body.*

FERDINAND: (Gods give me patience!) Gow and a gardener

Bearing some load along in the dusk to the dunghill,

Nay,—a dead branch. . . . But as I said, the Prince . . .

THE KING: They've set it down. . . . Strange that they work so late.

Then Gow is heard instructing the gardener the story he is to tell of how they had found the body this side the north wall, which the Prince had climbed to pick nectarines, and how it lies under the wall for the King to see. The King overhears a bit, enjoys an oath that Gow swears . . . "by the ninefold-cuckolded Jupiter". The gardener is obtuse. Asks Gow, "But how shall I say if any ask why our Lady the Queen . . ." Gow out of all patience with an ass stabs him.

THE KING: Why did Gow buffet the clown? . . . I'll go look. . . .

THE KING: The Prince! Not a dead branch? [*Uncovers the face*]. My flesh and blood! My son! My son! My son! . . .

"Loosed to adventure early!" Tell the tale.

So Gow then tells his story, and they argue as to why the Prince should bother himself to climb for nectarines, when all the fruit in the garden was his for the taking. And the King wonders how he can break the news to the Queen.

She'll grieve for him . . . as youth for youth. They were much of the same age.

Playmate for playmate. See, He wears her colours.

That is the knot she gave him last . . . last . . . Oh God! When was yesterday?

How many aching hearts have wondered "When was yesterday?" in the midst of their tragedy!

And the King who will not go in from the dew continues:

He'll take no harm of it. I'll follow presently. . . .

He's all his mother's now and none of mine—

Her very face on the bride pillow. Yet I tricked her.

But that was later—and she never guessed.

I do not think he sinned much—he's too young. . . .

Was ever there more bitter tragedy written? How deep and different a note is Kipling striking here!

Ferdinand and Gow pursue the matter, and give the dying gardener the *coup de grâce*. He dying says, poor soul, "I'd ha'



kept it secret till my dying day. But not now—not now—I'm dying. The Prince fell from the Queen's chamber window. . . ."

Gow says to him, plucking out the dagger, "Go in peace and lay your death to Fortune's door. He's sped . . . thank Fortune."

The Queen comes, the King implores her to keep within, and then he dies. Ferdinand advises Gow to disappear. And this is how it ends :

FERDINAND : My horse is at the gate. God speed you. Whither ?

Gow : To the Duke, if the Queen does not lay hands on me before. However it goes, I charge you bear witness, Señor Ferdinand, I served the old King faithfully. To the death, Señor Ferdinand—to the death !

It was more than we dare expect that even he who wrote *The Drums of the Fore and Aft* could so turn his dramatic sense. What he owes to the spirit of Shakespeare and Webster is evident enough.

Those who search will find many tags and phrases from Shakespeare wrapped in the text, taken unconsciously from a mind and a tenacious memory stored with such material of power and beauty. To a mind so ingenious and resourceful it was but natural that Puck, with the *motif* of a Summer Night's dream, should be made showman and prelude to a sight of England through the ages.

### *Kipling and the Craft*

There runs throughout the civilized world, as all the world knows in some sort, a mysterious concealed if only semi-secret influence and body known as Freemasonry, spoken of by its members as the "Craft". It also appears in mysterious, unorganized form in Asiatic countries. Its origins are wrapped in obscurities persisting through the ages far away into the mist of time. Tradition connects it with King Solomon and the building secrets of his great temple, whose quarry caves are seen to this day under the great hill of Jerusalem. It describes itself as "a system of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbol", and everywhere in the British Empire it is, perhaps, the greatest support that religion, morality and order have, however little we suspect it. It is, perhaps, one of those things only Anglo-Saxondom can be trusted with. Outside the Empire it has sinister association, and to be a Freemason is looked on with suspicion and often hatred. In British Masonry it is far otherwise. King Edward VII, King Edward VIII, and King George VI have held high offices therein, and a member of the Royal Family usually is at its head.

In India it flourishes and is the happy meeting-ground of creeds and races. Young Kipling, the assistant editor at Lahore, was soon affected by it, and elected to, and initiated in, Lodge Industry at Lahore. Not only the historicity, the romance and the tradition appealed to him, but the universality of the science, which he so aptly sang of in *The Mother Lodge*, viz. the Lodge of Initiation. The fact that it also works its secrets, its lessons, and its ceremonies through a stately ritual, unwritten and handed down through the ages, at once appealed to his literary instincts and to his ear, apt for effective phrase.

It is not too much to say that the whole of his writings are "larded" with Masonic references, Masonic analogy, and phrases and expressions from the ritual of what is often known as Blue Masonry. The beauties of the "further" Masonry, which is within the historical aegis of Christianity, he does not touch on, as, presumably, he had not ventured further. His rank was that of a full-fledged Master Mason, and he had, perhaps, also entered the side-halls of the Royal Ark Mariners, and the Mark.

Other beauties—such as the rebuilding of the temple by Zerubabel and the further mystery of Hiram Abif, or the search for the Holy Grail and the like—are outside even his rich experience.

Now, English Freemasons all over the world derive great pleasure and profit from searching his text for Masonic language and allusions, and—like washing for alluvial diamonds—they never know where they may not chance on them, nor have they ever found the last. As there are many many thousands of good Masons among the British reading public, and devoted admirers of Brother Rudyard Kipling's works, an attempt to refer to the more important allusions and employments will not come amiss, even in a book which the non-Mason may read. The latter, too, may be able to experience the delightful feeling of having caught for a moment a flash of lightning by its slippery tail.

We may say that Kipling uses Freemasonry in much the same way as he uses Holy Writ, viz. for the beauty of the story, for the force of the reference, and for the dignity, beauty and arrestiveness of the phrase. There is one more effect that familiarity denies us which is present in the Masonic allusion, and that is the almost uncanny hint of something unveiled. We have it in the death of McIntosh Jellaludin in the Sultan *serai* at Lahore as he hands over his precious manuscript and begins, "More ancient than . . . Pshaw !

What am I saying?" He is beginning from that beautiful piece of ritual handed down by word of mouth :

More ancient than the Golden Fleece, or Roman Eagle,  
More honourable than the Garter. . . .

And it is part of a beautiful ceremony of which the illicit knowledge now revealed will not help you to enter a sealed and tyled Lodge. His use of his knowledge will be evident as we handle some of his references. He comes very directly into the open in the verses referred to—*The Mother Lodge*—describing the motley of rank and religions, which obtains more overseas than in Britain.

There was Rundle, Stationmaster,  
An' Beazeley of the Rail,  
An' Ackman, Commissariat,  
An' Donkin' o' the Jail;  
An' Blake, Conductor-Sergeant,  
Our Master twice was 'e,  
With 'im that kept the Europe-shop,  
Old Framjee Eduljee.

We met upon the Level an' we parted on the Square  
An' I was Junior Deacon in my Mother Lodge out there.

That well describes an Indian Lodge in which many simple folk of many degrees form the bulk of the members. In the story *The Man Who Would be King*, the Craft takes pride of place as the mainspring and source of development of the plot. After interesting preliminaries in which Kipling meets the lesser hero as a loafer by a wayside railway junction in Rajputana and both the adventurers appear before him in his sub-editor's room at the office of his paper in Lahore, we see these two fairly launched on their great idea. That is to penetrate to the fabled settlement of Alexandrine Greeks away in the tangled water-torn mountains that swell up to the Pamirs beyond Chitral. Then it was a matter of fairly general belief that the mountains known as Kafiristan did contain such a pocket.

A few years after Kipling wrote *The Man Who Would be King* the travels of Sir George Scott-Robertson effectively dispelled the legend, but found a strange pre-Aryan race with strange language and religions. The country was later, quite unnecessarily, invaded and its people routed out by the late Amir Abdur-rahman. Tamerlane, centuries ago, had tried to penetrate there and failed in the snows. It was to these peoples Daniel Dravot, fugleman, and Peachy Carnehan, follower, were bent on going to sell Martini rifles and train their forces. The preliminaries are well told, and the whole

adventure develops quite believingly. There is a Masonic happening which is worth telling, especially as it is an instance of an amusingly misplaced criticism by one of the earlier and by no means unappreciative critics.

In *The Man Who Would be King* the teller of the story, presumably Kipling himself, relates how he meets a European loafer (Peachy Carnehan) down at this desert Rajputana junction, who asks him to do him a favour if he were coming this way again a day or so later. He was to find Daniel Dravot travelling like a gentleman in a second-class carriage at a Marwar junction. Kipling was in an intermediate carriage with the loafer. This is how they began—and Masons will recognize the gambit :

“ ‘I ask you as a stranger—going to the West,’ he said with emphasis.

“ ‘Where have *you* come from ?’ said I.

“ ‘From the East,’ said he. ‘And I am hoping you will give him the message on the Square—for the sake of my Mother, as well as your own.’

“Englishmen are not usually softened by appeals to the memory of their mothers, but for certain reasons, which will be fully apparent, I saw fit to agree.”

How the critic aforesaid makes this passage a pretext for saying how now and again Kipling’s literary judgment forsakes him, and he strikes an excruciatingly false note, false in sentiment and judgment, in the appeal “for the sake of their respective mothers” ! How unlikely and how futile ! says he.

That, of course, is where he slips up. The peculiar reference and appeal was a particularly sure and inside touch, given the character of Peachy Carnehan and his assumption that Kipling might also be of the Craft and therefore bound in duty to the Mother Lodge. But critics cannot all be wise, even if they think so.

However, the tale runs on to sheer Freemasonry. Peachy Carnehan, you remember, tells the story—the pitiful story—casting from a bag the dried red-bearded head of Daniel Dravot on the table : how they had been well received, and how Dravot had found that the Kafirs knew the earlier degrees and marks of Craft Masonry, and how they would run the whole country through that art, he founding Grand Lodge and being first Grand Master. How, though he and Peachy were Master Masons, they did not know the ritual and would have to fudge the Third Degree ; but apparently the priests had never been higher than the Second, a Fellow-Craft degree. Let us

read the story of the discovery as told by poor Peachy with the spiked and crucified hands :

“ ‘My Gord, Carnehan!’ says Daniel. ‘This is a tremenjus business, and we’ve got the whole country as far as it is worth having. . . . I’ve been marching and fighting for six weeks with the Army, and every footy little village for fifty miles has come in rejoiceful ; and more than that, I’ve got the key of the whole show, as you shall see, and I’ve got a crown for you ! ’ ”

Dravot explains to Peachy that they need fight no more, that they all know something of the Craft but not too much, and that they can be governed through it. He tells Peachy to shake hands with a chief, whom he calls “Billy Fish” after an engine-driver friend. Peachy is amazed to receive the Fellow-Craft grip, and asks if he knows the “word”. Dravot assures him that he does, and all the Priests, but that they do not know the Third Degree.

“ ‘I’ve known these long years . . . a God and a Grand-Master of the Craft am I, and a Lodge in the Third Degree I will open, and we’ll raise the head priests and chiefs of the villages.’ ‘It’s against all the law,’ I says, ‘holding a Lodge without warrant from anyone ; and you know we never held office in any Lodge.’ ”

And so on. A Third Degree Lodge Daniel held, and there were scenes of wild excitement when the older priests saw on the Grand Master’s apron the sign carved on a stone, unknown to most of them, and the fudging of the rituals by Master Masons of poor memory was a huge success. The new Lodge was opened in “ample form”, and Freemasons will know what that phrase denotes.

The story ends in tragedy, as all will remember, all along of a bit of skirt. But it remains as the most daring of Kipling’s incursions into actual ritual open and unashamed that he has ventured on. Immeasurably does the story gather force thereby.

On other occasions it is by reference and allusion rather than by direct use that the Kipling effects are produced.

In *The Press* you may note that :

The Mason may forget the word,  
The priest his Litany.

And in the story *A Matter of Fact* you will read, “Once a priest,

always a priest ; once a Mason, always a Mason ; but once a journalist, always and for ever a journalist."

In one of Kipling's earlier works, *Abaft the Funnel*, only republished in America, is an item *The Last of the Stories*, in which the author has a dream. The Devil of Discontent offers to take the author on a visit to one of the largest Hells—"The Limbo of Lost Endeavour".

"'Neat, isn't it?' said the Devil. 'Another joke of the master's, man of us, y'know. . . . Here's the master, stop and uncover.' Uncover ! I would have dropped on my knees, had not the Devil prevented me, at the sight of Maître François Rabelais sometime *Curé* of Mendon. . . . I made a sign that was duly returned."

In the story of Laughton O. Zigler, discussed in Chapter XVI on "Kipling and Americans", the American describes the leisurely tormenting of a British Mother Column thus : "The way we worked lodge was this . . . Then we'd go from labour to refreshment, resooming at 2 p.m. and battling till tea-time."

There is a clever introduction that Masons must have appreciated in *The Dog Hervey*, and the clue of the mysterious dog—an invisible dog haunting a former patient of the Inebriates' Home, said to be exactly like the dog belonging to the doctor's daughter—a weird and ghastly conception :

"'What's the dog like?' I asked.

"'Ah, that is comforting of you ! Most men walk through 'em to show they aren't real. As if I didn't know ! The dog . . . knows you perfectly. D'you know *him*?'"

"'How can I tell if he isn't real?' I insisted.

"'But you can ! . . . You do know the dog ; I'll prove it. What's the dog doing? Come on. *You* know.' A tremor shook him, and he put his hand on my knee, and whispered with great meaning, 'I'll letter or halve it with you. There ! You begin.'

"'“S”, said I to humour him, for a dog would most likely be standing, or sitting, or maybe scratching, or sniffing, or staring.

"'“Q”, he went on, and I could feel the beat of his shaking hand.

"'“U”, said I. There was no other letter possible ; but I was shaking too.

"'“I”,”

"'“N”,”

"'“T-i-n-g,” he ran out ! 'There ! That proves it.' And

the strange man had thus accurately described what that particular dog, of which there was an invisible phantom, would be doing. The story does not matter, but the lettering is a quaint thing to people of the Craft."

In *Rewards and Fairies*, in *The Wrong Thing*, we have Hal Dawe come to life again.

"'Be you the builder of the village hall?' he asked of Mr. Springett.

"'I be,' was the answer. 'But if you want a job . . .'

"Hal laughed. 'No faith!' he said. 'Only the Hall is as good and honest a piece of work as I'd ever ran a rule over. So, being born hereabouts, and being reckoned a master among masons, and accepted as a master mason, I made bold to pay my brotherly respects to the builder.'

"'Ah—um!' Mr. Springett looked important. 'I be a bit rusty, but I'll try ye!'"

He asked Hal several curious questions, and the answers must have pleased him, for he asked Hal to sit down. Not much to the outer world in its darkness, but quite pretty to the Mason.

In *A Book of Words*, which contains Kipling's speeches and addresses on important occasions, we find "duly entered and obligated" after his admission into the Stationers' Company, and in a speech "Imperial Relations" he refers to five urgent matters as the "Five Points of Fellowship", such being education, immigration, administration, etc., and again, elsewhere, "Canada possesses two pillars of strength and beauty in Quebec and Vancouver." Again, in *Banquet Night*, we have the definite Masonic legend somewhat embellished:

"Once in so often," King Solomon said,  
Watching his quarrymen drill the stone,  
We will club our garlic and wine and bread  
And banquet together beneath my Throne.  
And all the Brethren shall come to that mess  
As Fellow-Craftsmen—no more and no less.

And again in the more intimate legend:

Carry this message to Hiram Abif—  
Excellent Master of forge and mine:—  
I and the Brethren would like it if  
He and the Brethren will come to dine.  
(Garments from Bozrah, or morning dress)  
As Fellow-Craftsmen—no more and no less.

In *Debts and Credits* the Masonic story takes a different and definite *ad hoc* line. There are three stories that are told of and within a certain Masonic Lodge, "Faith and Works" No. 5837 E.C. This Lodge is once referred to in error as 5836, as precise Masons may have noticed. (It is, of course, a fictitious one, the highest ordinal Lodge in the English constitution being, when this story was written, 5238.) This Lodge has devoted itself to receiving and caring for Freemasons returning from the front, and the stories are *In the Interests of the Brethren*, *A Madonna of the Trenches*, and *A Friend of the Family*.

They deal very fully, but incidentally, with the Lodge fittings, and much of the incidental talk—*more* Kipling—is full of peculiarly apt allusions of all kinds, including that of a sergeant-major "in a trained voice" giving fraternal greetings from a District and Lodge in the East. These stories are discussed later as part of Kipling's contribution to the stories of the World War. Here they but emphasize his Masonic affinities and the subtlety of the aid that the Craft can give to the world. It was to the ministry of a doctor in the Lodge to those newcomers whose nerves were disarrayed that we owe the story of *A Madonna of the Trenches* and the trouble of Brother C. Strangwick, who told it.

In the early stories you will remember how in *The Rout of the White Hussars* there came an extraordinary letter to the regiment from "Secretary Charity and Zeal 3709 E.C." demanding the return of certain emblems of mortality. But it is in that fierce epic of reality already referred to, *With the Main Guard*, that we have an almost bare-faced but essentially realistic Masonic interlude peculiarly suited to the occasion. Mulvaney tells the story. It is in the midst of that fierce hand-to-hand fight with the Afghans in which a company of the "ould regiment" and another of the "Black Tyrone" are engaged. The hand-to-hand fighting is very close, and the men can hardly use their arms.

"'Knee to knee,' sings out Crook, wid a laugh whin the rush av our comin' into the gut shtopped, an' he was huggin' a hairy great Paythan, neither bein' able to do anything to the other, tho' both was wishful.

"'Breast to breast !' he says, as the Tyrone was pushin' us forward, closer an' closer.

"'An' hand over back !' says a sargint that was behin'. I saw a sword lick past Crook's ear, and the Paythan was took in the apple of his throat like a pig at Dromeen Fair.

"'Thank ye, Brother Inner Guard,' sez Crook, cool as a cucumber widout salt. 'I wanted that room.' "



So much for a very few of the source of the incidents and phrases illuminating much of Kipling's work. The game of hunting for more will not be unprofitable to the Mason.

### *Other Sources*

But Shakespeare, the Testaments, and the Craft are by no means the only sources which came within the scope of his voracious reading and his tenacious memory for striking incidents and for phrases that allure amazingly and scan instinctively. Dr. Johnson is not forgotten, for in *Brugglesmith*, when the teller is chased round St. Clement Dane's, he replies to the challenging policeman, "Sir, let us take a walk down Fleet Street." In *The Dog Hervey*, the dog that was S-Q-U-I-N-t-i-n-g, there is some parallel with Johnson's affection for the vicious but kindly Harry Hervey and the man whom the Doctor's daughter loved. The very title comes from Dr. Johnson. *Wireless*, which some claim to be one of Kipling's greatest conceptions, is sheer Keats in conception, in acknowledgment and in parallels. Indeed, Mr. Shaynor in his unconscious utterances shadows *The Eve of St. Agnes*.

*Jorrocks* does not come amiss, nor *Handley Cross*, though it is a lost opportunity that leaves alone the episode of the gentleman who raked his carriage drive to see if his wife had visitors while he was out. It was someone with this in his memory who dragged a camel harrow along the Sinai side of the Suez Canal every night at sun-down during the World War to see if Turkish spies had crossed in the night to or fro.

So, too, Milton, Browning and Longfellow subscribe to the list of learning, both by quotation and style. In the early *Education of Otis Yeare*, an apposite quotation is given of Browning's stinging yet forgiving lines on the heartless woman. Anyone with a sense of sonorous English—English that often parallels the Persian of Hafiz and the *Iqd-i-gul*—must treasure unwittingly the measures of Macaulay. In *Stalky and Co.*, Kipling actually and aptly quotes :

But by the yellow Tiber  
Was tumult and affright

In the story *The Horse Marines*, Mr. Moorshed is "apostrophin" his "'andiwork over fifty square mile o' country", with "attend all ye who list to hear!" till he reaches the "red glare on Skiddaw roused those beggars at Carlisle", meaning Leith Hill in a manner o' speaking.

So you may go on, and from *Grimm's Tales*, Jules Verne, with Captain Nemo in *Steam Tactics*, *Frank Fairleigh*, and in *The Village*

that *Voted the Earth was Flat*, such unusual study—dear, of course, to Kipling's rummaging literary instinct—as William Hone's *Everyday Book*, from which he draws his inspiration for the "Gubby Dance"; Dean Farrar's school stories, Ballantyne, Mrs. Oliphant and Anstey all call out to you as you pass along, and even such unusual food as J. A. Froude's only novel, the *Two Chiefs of Dunboy*, waves its hand. Old tunes and airs appeal, too; *La Fille de Madame Angot*—"possédant un grand magot"—and the *Old Obadiah*, *The Funeral March of a Marionette*, while John Bunyan and Mark Twain have delivered up their treasures too. Louisa Alcott has also been kissed on both cheeks, and Horace as well, in both *Lalage* and *My Son's Wife*; and Horace's satire *Credat Judas Appela*, "Tell that to the Marines"; Jane Austen's tribute and *Dane Gelt*, treated of later in the stories of the World War (Chapter XVII).

The story *The Janeites*, by the way, ended with a poem which began :

Jane went to Paradise,  
That was only fair.  
Good Sir Walter met her first  
And led her up the stair.  
Henry and Tobias,  
And Miguel of Spain,  
Stood with Shakespeare at the top  
To welcome Jane. . . .

This charming verse has given rise to controversy among the Kipling aces. Jane died ten years before Sir Walter Scott, but the stalwarts say it meant Sir Walter Raleigh, though not so appositely. Kipling, if asked, would have said, "*Jehanum ko jao*, I am a poet. I knew who I meant and I shan't tell"; and very properly, since England is a free country still, and no one can be compelled to dot his "i's" and cross his "t's", as in the United States that is bound fast behind the Statue of Liberty.

Incidentally, to learn who loved Jane, and who said in Hampshire, "I did—and I do," one must look within the portals of *Debits and Credits* and the pages of Jane's own *Persuasion*.

Now, lest anyone should think that I am joined with McTurk in debunking his hero, this study has been made to interest all those who would learn the sources of power, and how a craftsman enlarges his craft, and also in order to start for novices the pleasant *Chasse aux Sources*.

## CHAPTER VI

### UNCOLLECTED WORK

Uncollected Work—Indian Verse—*The Seven Nights of Creation*—Hans Breitman—*The Vision of Hamid Ah*—After Victor Hugo.

#### *Uncollected Work*

THERE is said to be far more of Kipling's work still to be collected—both verse and story—than has actually been so treated, and there are, of course, many reasons therefor. First he was an astoundingly prolific writer of verse and prose, and he had no knowledge of many of the things that he had written. Many a Kipling enthusiast has collected articles and verses to which his name was appended from many strange sources. Articles not bearing his name had no one save the author to identify them,<sup>1</sup> and when a discoverer found an unsigned article which by its style seemed unmistakable it was not always that Kipling would admit that it was his when the point was referred to him. Then again there is much of his work that—for reasons his admirers would not accept—seemed inadequate to him, and he would not republish.

Here are but a few of the many uncollected examples. The first is a ballad that those who know the Indian horse-dealer, especially the Afghan coper of the North, would rejoice in. It is called *The Ballad of Ahmed Shah*, and it appeared in the *Indian Planters' and Sporting Gazette* nearly fifty years ago. The MS. not long ago sold for £500, and it was recently reproduced privately in a number of *The Victorian*, the journal of the Victoria College, Jersey.

It is the metre and general rollicking style of *Boh Da Thone*. This is how it begins :

This is the ballad of Ahmed Shah,  
Dealer in "tats" in the Sudder Bazaar  
By the gate that leads to the Gold Minar,  
How he was done by a youth from Morar.

Now, Morar is the old contingent cantonment of the city of Gwalior, and, though occupied by the British for several years after the Indian Mutiny, was abandoned in the 'seventies

<sup>1</sup> Such as *The Battle of Rupert Square*, X<sup>a</sup> R.H.A., and other unsigned articles in the *St. James's Gazette*.

or early 'eighties, and given up to the Gwalior Government. It is therefore an obviously early signpost.

The *motif* is of the astute Afghan horse-dealer Ahmed Shah of the Mahbub Ali type that we know in *Kim*, who made a handsome living from selling dud ponies to subalterns, and what came of it. It is a long poem that the Army would certainly rejoice in, and will it is hoped be among those to appear in the book of hitherto uncollected verse that is said to be contemplated.

Ahmed Shah was a man of peace,  
His beard and his turban were thick with grease,  
His paunch was huge, and his speech was slow,  
And he swindled the subalterns high and low.

A judgment was brewing for Ahmed Shah at the hands of a blue-eyed subaltern, whose "check was beardless and boundless too".

The lad went to the artillery sergeant to find if there was anything that would suit his plans at the forthcoming casting, and the sergeant says that there is one that "ain't much use except for kicking recruits to the deuce".

The subaltern buys it at the sale, dopes it, and offers it to the Afghan, who falls for and buys the animal, which forthwith destroys half his stable and his grooms. The biter had been bit, and he

. . . fathomed the trick of the opium pill.  
His own old dodge that brought him pelf  
Had the subaltern turned against himself.

Finding himself outwitted, he had better plans than suing the lad, and drives off in an *ekka* to find him counting the purchase price, and they struck up an alliance and ran a racing stable together, so that 'the two Maguires were one'.

And the *envoi* runs thus :

. . . Whenever I'm able  
I plunge to my last clean shirt on their stable.

But those who know an old cantonment can see Ahmed Shah arriving in his one-horse shay with the idea of a racing pact that might well be made with a fellow-spirit. And you can see him giving the subaltern's bearer a rupee to wake the sahib up from his nap, into which a Hindustani lesson on a very hot

afternoon had put him, in time for an interview before guard-mounting or polo; and the Afghan sitting in a chair in the verandah listening to the *mynah* in his cage, and watching the monkey trying to catch ducks that waddle to the fountain. But then Kipling strikes old broken strings as forcibly as scents and smells or a soft breeze on one's cheek.

Here is another of his uncollected Indian fragments which appeared in the *Civil and Military Gazette* of Lahore in 1891, after Kipling had returned from Allahabad to visit the earlier scenes of Lahore. That was in Christmas week, when all the hard-worked officials from the canals, the wilder districts, and the soldiers from the frontier came down to the northern capital to attain something of the homeland Christmas scenes. It is called *Home*, for so he regarded Lahore, home of all the men of action and sacrifice that he loved to write and sing of:

The Lord shall change the hearts of men  
The earth and sky and shore,  
But I'll go back to my own kind  
And be with my kin once more.

Since he cannot fight on the frontier, or among the Afghan hills, and since the Lion's breed is the object of his admiration, he will see that at least the world shall take heed of their doings. That is the pressman's privilege. Every stroke that they struck he has brought to light. He only asks that they shall welcome him for a week ere he once more becomes the Galley Slave, the slave of the printer's galley, and he asks them to recognize his share.

Will you carry my name in your hearts, my men,  
As one who spoke of your worth,  
Till the end of our fight is won, my men,  
And God shall judge the earth?

How prophetic seemed that last verse as we laid him in the Abbey! To one whose thousand memories leap at the thought of that Lahore week and the countless Christmas camps, the camp-fires, the polo, the racing, the lovelies,<sup>1</sup> and the dances after long months on the Frontier or deep in canals, the lilt of this old buried ballad comes like the scent of the *vlei* grass, or the seaweed below the chine!

Only the other day Alfred Noyes in *The Times* called to memory an uncollected poem—*Homing Back*—written by Kipling in response to verses by the older American poet James Whitcomb Riley, verses of thanks to Kipling for his new vivifying work so far back as 1891. This is the last stanza of

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<sup>1</sup> Now known as "frippets".

Riley's, and those who love the work of Kipling will hail it in all its prophecy :

So, poet and romancer, old as young  
And wise as artless, masterful as mild,  
If there be sweet in any song I've sung  
'Twas savoured for thy palate, O my son.  
For thee the lisping of the children all,  
For thee the youthful voices of old years,  
For thee all chords untamed or musical,  
For thee the laughter and for thee the tears.

To this Kipling answers in *The Home*, though Mr. Noyes tells us that the verses of which the last has just been quoted was in continuation of previous relations. He describes these Kipling verses as "practically unknown, and almost lost", telling how he found them in Indianapolis, in the footnotes to a privately printed bibliography of Riley's prodigious and often forgotten work. It is thus that all collectors find their prizes, and there are as many hidden Kipling gems as ever postage-stamps or coins in a rummage. Noyes also makes the pertinent comment that since occasional disgruntled critics persist in attributing to Kipling a racial narrowness which *Kim* alone should have been enough to disprove, these stanzas should still further reinforce the refutation thereof. He loves them, too, for those which relate to America and England. All who have known, or now see, them will agree.

Your trail runs to the westward,  
And mine to my own place.  
There is water between our lodges,  
And I have not seen your face.

But since I have read your verses  
'Tis easy to guess the rest,  
Because in the hearts of the Children  
There is neither East nor West.

Born to a thousand fortunes  
Of good or evil hap,  
Once they were kings together  
Throned in a mother's lap.

Surely they know that secret,  
Yellow and black and white,  
When they meet as kings together  
In innocent dreams at night.

By a nook they all can play with,  
Grubby and grimed and unshod,  
Very happy together,  
And very near to God.

Here verse one is repeated :

And that is well . . . for crying  
Should neither be written nor seen,  
But if I call you 'Smoke in the Eyes'  
I know you will know what I mean.

### *Indian Verse*

There is one more of the uncollected early verse, hugely appreciated in India when it appeared in the middle 'eighties, even then evincing the gift of angle and phrase in a subject which was not particularly his. In the prospectus of the Umballa Military and Hunt Meeting—to meet probably a criticism that the fences were too nearly approaching those of the Grand National—appeared a notice to the effect that the steeplechase course had been altered, and made easier, ditches filled up, etc., etc. Some amelioration was doubtless necessary, but there were bold and fine riders in India then, and the clubs made merry. The verses appeared under the *nom de guerre* of "Kingcraft", the name of the best pony in India of that day, in the *Civil and Military Gazette* :

### ICHABOD

And it began with an introduction in italics :

*Get a nervous Lady's pony—Get the oldest you can find.  
Strap an ulster on the pommel, tie a bedding-roll behind.  
To a Hanoverian Pelham hitch a standing martingale—  
Then hang upon his jaws, my son, and listen to the tale.*

The verses are naturally contemptuous, but I read them for the memories and glories of the days when I first joined, and the men whose names are quoted were famous between the flags.

And we gathered at Umballa when the 'seventies were low,  
And we rode like Helen Blazes in the days of long ago.  
Answer, men of many fractures, William Beresford—give ear !  
"Bertie" sweltering in Calcutta, Johnstone, Humphries, Percy Vere.  
Did *you* fill the yawning ditches ? Did you lay the railings low,  
On the old Umballa racecourse, in the days of long ago ?

There are many more in this category, some so immediately and locally topical as hardly to merit reproduction ; others—notably *The Ballad of Ahmed Shah* and equally *The Vision of Hamid Ali*.

*In Partibus* (appeared in Lahore in 1889) is a comparison

between India and London in soot and fog, very much to the advantage of India. The society of men who were doing things all day was what he missed most, and he said so. But it provoked a reply in the *Week's News* of Allahabad, entitled *The Land of Regrets*, from the man homesick for London sights and sounds, the man from the back of beyond, as compared with him at the hub of Lahore. Both were long, and set side by side would amuse a generation that is fast passing away, but is hardly worth giving *in extenso*. Here are the italicized openings of the India-sick R. K. and the home-sick man in India :

*In Partibus*  
by  
Rudyard Kipling

*The Land of Regrets*  
(After R. K.)

*The 'buses run to Battersea,  
The 'buses run to Bow,  
The 'buses run to Westbourne Grove.  
And Notting Hill also.  
But I am sick of London Town  
From Shepherd's Bush to Bow.*

*The 'buses run to Bow Bazaar,  
The trams to Delhi Town,  
The train cranks up from far  
Bombay  
With ladies coming down,  
And languid wives, and puling  
babes,  
And Captains white and brown.*

The rest is not remarkable. Kipling upbraids fog and soot ; and others the sun and the glare and the *poochis* (animals that fly and creep).

### *The Seven Nights of Creation*

Very remarkable in its knowledge of Islam is *The Seven Nights of Creation* (*Calcutta Review*, April 1886), obviously written in Lahore, which begins :

Yusuf the potter told me this today  
In the cool shadow of the Bhatti Gate  
When a red scorpion stung me and I railed  
Breaking his mid-day slumber. Yusuf knows  
The tales of all men's tongues.

Yusuf tells of how the Almighty laboured all the long six aeons of time, that are written "day", and how God saw that it was good, but also how Eblis from the Pit had power in the night and made all the horrible beasts of the earth.

Kipling knows that the Muhammedan legend has a story of creation not unlike to that of Genesis, and makes Yusuf elaborate it at length, with great beauty in the manner of the telling. Eblis in making the dread beasts, makes those that



bear the 'baser likeness of God's work', and as one talks and the other listens, the long paw of a monkey from the roof above the stall neatly snatches a double handful of grapes, the sweet *balushai* ! The listener laughs, although half his stall is wrecked, and asks, "Is he the work of Eblis ?" Yusuf stretched a lean forefinger at the shrine of Hanuman the Monkey God hard by—and let the monkeys have it ; told the story of their fashioning—how Eblis wrought all night with the seven soils to make a man, too ; great was the noise of the fashioning and mighty the labour and

It is written, Eblis called  
Three times to God to stay the flying night.  
*Allah al Bari* heard him (He is Great !),  
And held three times her pinions till the  
Cries ceased and the work was perfect.  
Yusuf smiled

But the day had come but to reveal the work just finished, and he sees amid the laughter of the sons of God the wretched fruit of his labours.

Eblis, as related by Yusuf, reproaches himself and everyone else for the monstrosity that he has produced and men call monkey. Indeed Yusuf has his revenge for his lost grapes.

And so forth at some length more, till Eblis, finally helpless, uprooting grass

. . . "My greatest work is mockery,  
Depart, O ape ! Depart, and leave me foiled !"  
This tale told Yusuf by the Bhatti Gate,  
Mocking the apes with pellets from his wheel.

Were it not for its length, which is over a hundred and forty lines, it, like *Ahmed Shah*, is worth collecting.

*The Proverbs of Sillyman* (the *Pioneer Mail*, February 10, 1886) is much as the *Maxims of Hafiz*. It was signed "Ibn Evil 'Un", and is a jest at the financial methods of the Government of India :

As a roaring lion, and a raging bear, so is an income-tax over a poor people.

Foolish men lay up treasure, but the wise man taxeth it.

As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke in a swine's snout, so is a Financial Member without discretion.

And suchlike—of no great interest today.

*Itu and His Gods* appeared in the *Civil and Military Gazette* of October 10, 1887, a long poem of which, in collected verse, *Evvara and his Gods* would seem to be a reconstructed version.

*Hans Breitman as an Administrator* (*Pioneer*, September 15, 1888), with apologies to C. G. Leland, is a different jest at different folk than the ape world, and is full of very great wisdom and thought of India. Hans talks to Lord Reay, Governor of Bombay. Lord Reay rather suffered from the hot-air complex. He forces his way past the Darwaza Bund and finds His Excellency.

He found der grate Herr Gofernor  
In bens and ink geshpilt,  
Wropt up in administration  
Likewise in a plazin' kilt.

Hans was sat down on the sofa and given a long cigar, while the Governor told of trouble with a seditious and more than ignorant editor who was letting his pen run on.

You see, the babu in the ink-pot was a trouble in India fifty years ago and earlier, and there was a ludicrously abusive Press. Hans is full of wisdom.

Dere's a certain sort of cussin'  
Dot bolidicks mostly breeds—  
Slanganderin' men by nations  
And drowin' mud on deir creeds.

Hans has a lot to say, and gives a tip from Kansas.

The Governor was getting it hot. He looked at the ceiling, he looked at the floor. Never had Lord Reay, Dutchman and Scotsman too, been so handled by man or woman before.

And this was the tip :

De man dot publishes articles  
Peyond his politishescope  
De Vigilance Committee  
Sub-edits—mit a rope.

It is all very good sense even for our days of grace and mischief-makers in print. Hans is surprised that Lord Reay stands such doings :

Potzblitz and dou art a Deutscher.<sup>1</sup>  
Herr Gott ! und a Baron too !  
Mit a lien on de Sherman nation.

But I guess I haf taught you some-dings.

And perhaps he had.

In the *Calcutta Review* of July 1886 appeared *King Solomon's*

<sup>1</sup> Lord Reay, as all the world should know, was part Dutch and part Scot, the *mélange* often renewed.

*Horses*, an interpretation of the legend told by Al Karam, when his magnificent horses were paraded as usual before him. He suddenly says, "Verily I have loved the lore of earthly good, above the remembrance of my Lord, and I have spent the time in viewing these horses till the sun is hidden by the veil of night"; whereupon he had them slain—a pitiful story, and there was behind the sorrow for the Lord some jealousy of Hiram King of Tyre to stage a greater sacrifice. But Solomon's heart was smitten as his favourite horse pleaded with him :

Out of the press a red horse reared himself,  
Black with the sweat of horror, white with foam  
(Accursed be my knowledge of brute speech !)  
Crying, "What sin is ours that we die,  
My brother ?"

King Solomon would have stayed the slaughter, but it was too late. His orders had been obeyed, and across the silent court the voice of Hiram, King of Tyre, "All honour to King Solomon." But no more such horses came from him again.

And Hiram's fleet has sailed, nor brings again  
Another steed as fair . . . Oh ! Most wise King !

A song truly of dust and ashes and Dead Sea fruit.

A *Rhodian Portrait* (1886) depicted W. E. Gladstone as he tried to throw away the Empire and stage his anti-Norman conquest :

The salient points of Mephistopheles  
Pecksniff and Titus Oates, some features catch . . .  
From lying Pinto, and from crazy Patch  
Combine thrasonic swell and craven creep  
Couple proud Caesar with Uriah Heep.

We need not give more. The nation has long ago made its own the Gladstonian good and spued up the evil.

*The Bushman's Daughter* is one of his early contributions to the British Press (*St. James's Gazette*, August 13, 1890), and deals with an extraordinarily severe sentence passed on a bushman's child of ten, reported in the Press.

There was a girl, and a naughty little girl,  
And she was a child of ten ;  
And she stole a real live horse, my dear,  
From the fields of the Englishmen.

And the verse renders thanks—it was sung by Hottentots—that they are not Englishmen; a bitter and well-deserved satire, and one showing how even in these earlier years Kipling's so-called 'sabre-rattling' was not his main theme of life.

Let us hope the Justices were duly scarified and the child released.

*A Ballad of Dak Bungalows* (*Week's News*, February 11, 1888) sings of the Indian travellers' rest-house and the fare of the "sudden death" fowl and the *Khansaman's* cry, "*Khodawand, siruf murghi hai.*"<sup>1</sup>

*The Half-Way House* (*Pioneer*, April 15, 1887) is a soliloquy written at the foot of the Simla Hills, at the rest-house where folk changed from *shigram*, the four-wheeled carriage, to *tonga*, the two-wheeled cart. In those days the broad-gauge rail had not reached Kalka, let alone the two feet six inch climbed the mountain. At the half-way house, half the world would go by :

The Subaltern jostles the grey *Qui-hye*  
(Of Council he may be a Member)  
And *la vielle coquette* goes hurrying by,  
Like June disguising December.  
All hurrying, some for promotion or place,  
And some over-burdened with leisure.

It goes on to comment on the *tongas* taking up the old *shigram* loads, and none giving a thought to the chiel takin' notes, who knew them all.

On September 1, 1888, the *Pioneer* had a paragraph hinting that the rewards and promotions made by the Commander-in-Chief in India, then Sir Frederick Roberts, were at times not well deserved, prompted obviously by a disgruntled minority who talked of "Bobs' Jobs". Kipling took up the challenge in *A Job Lot* and somewhat scarified the poor old *Pioneer*, which lashing it had rather asked for.

Perpend, retreat, refrain, reform,  
O man of Kandahar;  
For even pocket Wellingtons  
May carry things too far.

Then this chorus was at one time sung all over India, and the verses say that if even the *Pioneer* were wrath, what must Lord Roberts be? And those whose memories go back afar will

<sup>1</sup> "Master, I have no food but a fowl."

remember the story of the brigade, which quite unfairly started the tale.

We've heard it before, but we'll drink once more  
While the Army sniffs and asks  
For Bobs its pride, too lately died,  
And is now succeeded by Jobs.

### *The Vision of Hamid Ali*

There is one more that is worth recording, because some of it is Kipling at his best in Eastern vein ; it comes from the *Calcutta Review* so far back as October 1885. It is *The Vision of Hamid Ali*, and is remarkable for its setting forth of that fanatical aspiration that lies somewhere in every Moslem heart. Its wisdom is philosophical, and the interludes with Azizun are glamorous. It begins : "Thus the *ganja*<sup>1</sup> burning and the city sunk in sleep."

Azizun of the Dauri Bagh ; the Pearl  
And Hamid Ali of the Delhi Gate  
Were present when the Muezzin called to prayer  
At midnight, from the mosque of Wazir Khan

There was much wild talk among the Moslems present against the Prophet and the Twelve (the Twelve Imaams) in which Hamid took no part, while Azizun's anklets twinkled when she turned, and the Pearl of Courtesans laughed at some fancy in her sleep.

Hamid Ali, drunk with opium, starts up and cries out his vision, and calls to the *moulvie* to write it down, as he sees it.

Before the perfect Flower had dulled our brains  
Azizun ; Hamid Ali ; I, the Pearl,  
Spoke of the Prophet, and the other, Christ.

And whether Islam shall arise again  
And drive the Christ across the Western Sea.  
As people hold shall be in two more years.

And Islam and the Sword make all things clean.

And this is what the *moulvie* wrote as Hamid Ali dictates :

The mosque has fallen. Hamid Ali saw.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ganja*—opium.

The domes sink inwards, and the minarets  
Break at the base and crumble like the dust.

Ours was an idle dream. The Pearl laughed low,  
"I dreamt no dream, but ye ! My breasts are real.  
My lips—my love, O Hamid ! Nothing else."

But Hamid insists on relating all his vision. None of the world's gods or prophets was of avail. Nor Islam, nor the Prophet, nor the Twelve, nor Buddha, nor Christ. All fell, the Banner, the Cross, the Wheel of Life, and the Hindu Goddess Parbatti, broken at the waist.

And Hamid answered, "Surely, it is writ"  
Whereat the Pearl laughed louder—  
"Is it writ ?  
Who wrote ? and wherefore ? Let the vision go  
For I at least am real."  
Then the dawn. . . .

And the singer of the song adds : "God grant it was the *ganja*, for were it not, Hamid were lost for ever with the Pearl."

And that in outline is *The Vision of Hamid Ali*, surely worthy in power to be among the volumes !

*After Victor Hugo*

In 1886 there appeared in the *Civil and Military Gazette* of Lahore *Les Misérables*, copied in style and metre from Victor Hugo. Kipling himself has told, in *Something of Myself*, how he came to write it, and so perhaps we may allude to it more freely. The Indian Press was very pessimistic on the fate of the rupee in the face of the great silver crisis then upsetting the world.

### LES MISERABLES

To be virtuous one must be happy.  
This is a fact more. It is a fact which can be proved.  
And to be happy it is necessary to be rich.  
How rich ? do you ask.  
Enormously—Vander-biltonically ! As were once  
*Messieurs les Anglais* in the land of Dupleix and Plassey.  
*Ces Anglais* who have now disappeared.  
You smile ? Is it not so then ?

But he has himself seen them blotted out, abolished, assimilated—these arrogant consuls and pro-consuls. The

Roupé was an abnormal and monstrous coin and it wavered. "Have you ever", he asks, "seen a franc waver, a napoleon waver? Never!"<sup>1</sup> But he has the reason: the English are a nation of drunkards. *Voilà!* But he returns to his sheep, and because he is poor he abhors the evolution of finance. It interests him not.

But this Roupé.

It wavered. It flickered. It sank. It descended.

It contracted itself as a lady in her corsage.

Have you, my pupil so virtuous, ever seen a lady in her corsage?

She contracts marvellously. She is also living.

And so forth *ad lib.* till the merry ending. It was the French Bourse which had encompassed it!

It was the *revanche* of Plassey, of Blenheim, of Crécy, of Agincourt, of Waterloo.

But there were three more essays in the same style as affairs of the day. Mr. Gladstone had been loosing some pleasant platitudes on Indian aspirations.

It was the East—beautiful, un pitying and old.

It was, moreover, the East, inhabited by the Englishman.

An Englishman has no sense of humour.

A man without a sense of humour is a monstrosity, *incroyable*.

All Englishmen are monsters, *incroyables*.

I include the German who is almost an Englishman.

And the Englishman says, "Goddam, where is an omnibus?" but the East says, "I have not it here",<sup>2</sup> and John Bull is *furibonde* and "demands his omnibus, his Rosbif, his rough towell and tubb"—the traditional Bull of the angry French 'nineties.

Mistrust then the Englishman when he is generous,  
He will sell you a young dog.

And so forth, excellent Victor Hugo, but perhaps more parody than metre. All about the Rosbif, before we sent the East to school and to learn, and a final reference to William Ewart Gladstone:

Meanwhile a *bourgeois* of the most respectable, who exposes indecently his braces when he cuts trees for the

<sup>1</sup> Ah, happy Victor Hugo—dead!

<sup>2</sup> But now omnibuses run to Kabul, to Parachenar, to Wana.

purpose of religion, exhorts her with tears to enter the strife political. She the Messalina of Monarchs, the Cleopatra of the Ganges, inconstant, insatiable, shameless, old !

Before we turn to a very different theme, one may see Lord Dufferin and Theebaw, ex-King of Burma, whom His Excellency visits at Rutnagiri, to which spot Theebaw has been relegated. Thus :

*LE ROI EN EXILE*

The amiable Theebaw and the lovely Supiali received His Excellence With sherbet of the most possible cold and a Burmese cheroot. The Burmese cheroot is like the British policy. It is not strong enough and takes long to finish. Also it makes men sick.

. . . . .

The silence was profound. His Excellence looked doubtfully at the cheroot. The lovely Supiali, with grace inexpressible, bit it.

Before women and tobacco, all men are equal  
When both are good, or bad.  
Theebaw smiled. His Excellence smiled  
The lovely Supiali blushed.  
The *géné* disappeared. When a lady blushes there is  
no *mauvais honte* possible.

The foregoing allusions give us some faint hint of the coming dish for which we wait. But Kipling, like Swinburne, had no desire that all his earlier efforts should be disinterred. Collectors must collect, since that is one of the world's hobbies, but most of those verses that are here alluded to can hardly be left out of a collection, unless he himself has left instructions otherwise.



## CHAPTER VII

### KIPLING'S SOLDIERY AND THEIR WARS

*Soldiers Three*—Kipling as a War Writer—The Afghan Wars and the North-West Frontier—The Burma Side of the Frontier—The Sudan—South Africa—A Campaigning Phrase Book.

#### *Soldiers Three*

It was *Soldiers Three* that really served as the swishing, resonant introduction of the young author to the British reader. No one had tried to characterize and to interpret the soldier, fantastically or otherwise, to the outer world. The appearance in this first interpretation of the famous trio ran through several of the subsequent sets of stories, with Mulvaney as the principal interpreter and initiator. Kipling must have got his idea of these stories first from his friends that he met in Lahore, in the British guard-room in the old Mogul fortress that frowns down on the city, and this has been dwelt on already in discussing the "origins" of his early stories.

The characters, especially that of Mulvaney, depict the soldiers of a régime long past, the dying of the long-service soldier. But the idea that he was different from the later men is erroneous. The soldier type only alters with the gradual change in the nation, and now that the classes which furnish the men who enlist are sober, the soldier is sober. Indeed, so character-forming and uplifting is the life of the Army that the mass of men leave it—and always have left it—as better citizens than their friends. The enormous number of ex-soldiers who do exceedingly well in civil life and have always done so is proof of this. At regimental reunions this is always a remarkable feature. I have known the old soldiers in the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, intimately for over fifty years. Their faces and appearance never change, nor does the staunch common sense of their outlook. With sobriety and education as a universal feature, their general interests and demeanour have advanced in proportion.

Mulvaney is the real "old soldier" of fable, a good soldier, too, who knows his duty and will do it, for all his failings. The comparatively few old ne'er-do-weels from the ranks who tramp the countryside are often unemployable in regular civil work, but, call for veterans for a veteran battalion on emergency

and they will be there, jump into the old ways, and die happily in the last ditch at duty's call. Of such was Mulvaney, and in taking this character, as has been shown, from the reminiscences of old Bancroft, a Bengal artilleryman of the 'forties, Kipling added to his own experiences with the detachment of the Royal Irish Regiment at Jutogh, hard by Simla. Thereby he has created a real and lifelike character as lovable as that type of Irishman always was, and as Patsy and Jamesy still are when it is a matter of a salmon gaff.

Learoyd may be taken as a true type who reminds one, as already said, of Oakroyd. Ortheris is overdone, and given words and sentiments that do not belong to the type, as Francis Adams, in an early critique which we have examined, fiercely insists.

It is also worth our while understanding that the soldier himself never regarded Kipling as his own particular bard, generally never read him, and would not have realized the power and force of the stories. Here and there he would recognize that Kipling did know a thing or two about the evasion of authority and other pranks ; but the interpretation was not for him. It is for us, even we who have led him, and fathered him, that the pictures fit, because they fill our imagination of what a soldier, especially a soldier of that period, would know or say.

*Soldiers Three* consisted of seven stories of which the *Big Drunk Draf'* and *With the Main Guard* are the outstanding gems, and critics have at times commented on the unevenness of these and other stories. But, my masters, what do you expect ? For if every artist's piece of work were a masterpiece there'd be no masterpieces at all ! Answer me that, sorr ! as Mulvaney might say. The other great story of this series appears in *Wee Willie Winkie*, viz. *The Drums of the Fore and Aft*,\* a triumph of description already examined. The rest of the soldier stories dealing with this trio are not so effective, except the last in *Soldiers Three—Black Jack*. Here Mulvaney tells of an experience in the Black Tyrone, and incidentally gives that description of the murder gangs in Ireland that were so prophetic of the more dastardly tragedy of the post-War period—the murder of officers in their beds, of which the thrice cowardly killing of Admiral Somerville has been a sequel. In the hope, as Kipling hoped, that this country will not forget sooner than is good for them what it has endured, Mulvaney may be quoted :

“The Tyrone was recruited any fashion in the ould days. A draf' from Connemara . . . a draf' from Ports-

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\* Not a Mulvaney, Ortheris and Learoyd story.

mouth . . . a draf' from Kerry an' that was a blazin' bad draf' ! Here, there and iverywhere . . . but the large av thim was Oirish . . . Black Oirish. Now there are Oirish and Oirish, the good are as good as the best, but the bad are wursst than the wursst. 'Tis this way. They clog together in pieces as fast as thieves, and no wan knows fwhat they will do till wan turns informer, and the gang is bruk. But ut begins again, a day later, meetin' in holes 'an corners and swearing bloody oaths and shtickin' a man in the back and runnin' away, an' thin waitin' for the blood money on the reward papers . . . to see if ut's worth enough."

*The Mutiny of the Mavericks* harps on much the same story, as does also the end of the coward agitator that Francis Adams so admires as a piece of writing ; indeed, as a matter of prophecy, we had a similar experience near Simla in 1921, when a party of such in the Connaught Rangers tried to rush their quarter-guard, and one of them was hanged, with several others sentenced. The latter are the men whom they especially want to honour in Ireland at this moment. Kipling had a fine distaste for the breed.

In *Plain Tales from the Hills* there are several more soldier stories of Mulvaney and the Three—*The Three Musketeers*, *The Daughter of the Regiment*, *The Madness of Private Ortheris* and *The Taking of Lungtungpen*. Of these, *The Daughter of the Regiment* and the story of Jhansi McKenna and Ould Pummeloe in the cholera outbreak is one that should live as history, since it tells of the days when cholera periodically swept cantonments and the regiments were sent marching away from it. "Corporal Forbes", as the men called the *cholera morbus*, was a very deadly enemy before science stepped in, and this story is told with force. It is also a good illustration of Kipling's way of rendering tribute to those women who follow their men round the world. It is Mulvaney again who tells the story for Kipling—the convenient Mulvaney ; and there could be no more effective mouthpiece.

"Pray to the Saints that you may niver see cholera in a throop-train ! 'Tis like the judgment av God hittin' down from the nakid sky ! . . . the Orficer Commandin' sent a telegrapt up the line, three hundher' mile up, askin' for help. Faith we wanted ut, for ivry sowl av the followers ran for dear life as soon as the thrain stopped. . . . Thin the day began wid the noise of the carr'ages an' the rattle av the men on the platform fallin' over, arms an' all, as they stud for to answer the Comp'ny muster-roll before goin' over to the camp."

"Ould Pummeloe", the ample wife of Sergeant McKenna—

"McKenna me man"—is sitting on her bedding-roll trying to keep little Jhansi (her children had been named after the cantonment of their birth) quiet.

"Thin Ould Pummeloe turns to the women an' she sez, 'Are ye goin' to let the bhoys die while you're picknickin', ye sluts?' sez she. 'Tis wather they want. Come on an' help!' Wid that she turns up her sleeves an' steps out for a well behind the rest-camp . . . little Jhansi trottin' behind her wid a *lotah* an' string, an' the other women followin' like lambs, wid horse-buckets and cookin'-pots."

And then the long line of thim return to the platforms. Hark to Ould Pummeloe who must be sixty round the bunt.

"'McKenna me man!' she sez, wid a voice on her like grand-roun's challenge, 'tell the bhoys to be quiet. Ould Pummeloe's comin' to look after thim—wid frec dhrinks.'"

"But, just before that, Ould Pummeloe, on her knees over a bhoys in my squad . . . right-cot man he was to me in the barrick . . . tellin' him the warrud av the Church that niver failed a man yet, sez, 'Hould me up, bhoys! I'm feeling bloody sick!' . . . She misremembered that she was only wearin' her ould black bonnet, and she died wid 'McKenna me man' houldin' her up, and the bhoys howled whin they buried her.

That night a big wind blew an' blew, an' blew the tents flat. But it blew the cholera away. . . . Av you will belave me, the thrack av the sickness in the camp was for all the wurruld the thrack av a man walking four times a figur-av-eight through the tents. They say 'tis the Wandherin' Jew takes the cholera wid him. I believe ut."

So there you have what is sheer history, for soon there will be none to tell how the cholera took a regiment, and you have it told with the powerful sense of values and shadow that no historian could write for you; and there is the drama and tragedy of Ould Pummeloe and little Jhansi with her legs dangling from a soldier's sun-helmet.

*Life's Handicap* also has three more of the soldier series, viz. *The Incarnation of Krishna Mulvaney*—a delightful extravaganza, *The Courting of Dinah Shadd*—one of the sweetest things ever written, of which more will be said in the chapters on Kipling's Women, and *On Greenhow Hill*, a war story of understanding.

Dramatically, the cream of them all—which, however, has

nothing to do with the trio—is *The Drums of the Fore and Aft*, quoted from in Chapter II.

In *Many Inventions* we have *My Lord the Elephant*, a triumphant Mulvaney story, *His Private Honour*, Ortheris' Tale, and *Love o' Women*, a story told by Mulvaney and already referred to.

### *Kipling as a War Writer*

His early years did not see Kipling taking part as spectator or correspondent in the Afghan War, which was over before his time, nor in the Third Burman War, which ended in the annexation of Upper Burma, nor in any of the Frontier expeditions of those days. His first war experience was in South Africa, officially as a correspondent and editor of *The Friend*, and swept into all and any of the welfare and comfort work ancillary thereto. But whether he was present or whether he was not, he has the same gift of taking some incident heard or known of—and the two are not the same—and turning them into living records of what the men of that day did or said, so that those of the future may see how their forebears comported themselves. Where Kipling paints from the living model, he paints with a sure touch. His captains and subalterns were the living men of those days, and many of us have served a "Crook" O'Neil, and drawn comfort and strength therefrom, and learnt how men are held in a crisis.

Let us therefore look at the three early wars—early to the men of the World War. Here let it be remarked that "Soldiers Three" were the soldiers of the late 'seventies and early 'eighties, the men of the Peiwar Kotal, and Ali Musjid, and of Jowaki, and not the men of the 'nineties, as the persistent inaccuracy of the films must needs show. The troops in Jowaki and the first phase of the Second Afghan War, when "Crook" O'Neil came to the rescue "hand to hand, and knee to knee", were in scarlet and blue as their fathers before them, the loose, coloured serge, rather than the tunic or coatee, and not in the khaki of the films. The artist who painted Lew and Jakin with fife and drum, playing the regimental march alone in the valley to a battalion that for the moment was struck still—as has at times happened to the best—has painted them accurately in scarlet.

The World War as seen in Kipling's story and verse is worthy of a special chapter of itself hereafter.

### *The Afghan Wars and the North-West Frontier*

The majority of the soldier stories deal with dramatic, humorous and social barrack life in India in the piping times of peace. But five of them have historic value of their own as

dealing with the wars of the 'eighties, and being full with that colour which is but the younger sister of true history. *With the Main Guard* has been cited as one of the really powerful stories. It is undoubtedly that. It is a reminiscence of the Second Afghan War; which phase in the Second does not transpire, although Mulvaney refers to it as "after Ghuzni". In this war there were two phases so separate that they were really separate campaigns, and it was by chance that they followed closely on each other.

The story is told by Mulvaney one terrible night on guard in the hot season in Fort Amara, the great fort of Lahore. It was when he was with the "ould Rigiment", which we may accept as the 18th Royal Irish, and it tells of a terrible hand-to-hand fight with Pathans, which in this case would be Afghans, hand-to-hand in a jam of the hills, and a company of his own battalion, with a company of his former corps, the Black Tyrone, were fighting side by side . . . his company under the famous Captain "Crook" O'Neil—"Old Crook"—and the Tyrone (who were short of officers) had sent "a little officer bhoy". Those were the days when the sergeants of the line were even stauncher and more reliable than they are now. Its Masonic aspect has already been treated of.

Because Afghanistan and the North-West Frontier of India furnish all the tragedy and glory of the Army in India for three generations, it was not unfitting that Mr. Kipling should have sung of them again and again. Most of those Frontier stories bring a lump to the throat—nay, more than a lump, a wild surge of enthusiasm. One of the most effective and the most admired is the *Drums of the Fore and Aft* aforementioned. That is a medley of Maiwand and Ahmed Khel; the first, one of the worst defeats in open plain that the British Army has experienced, though much relieved by lesser gallantry. Ahmed Khel was Sir Donald Stewart's hard-fought victory on the march to relieve Sir Frederick Roberts, who had been beleaguered in the Afghan cantonment outside Kabul by tens of thousands of Kohistanis in the heart of winter.

The term "Fore-and-Aft" is a memory of the tradition of fighting both ways, the rear rank and the front rank of the thin red line—that gave the 28th their cap badges behind and before, and the old name for the 59th, who were at Ahmed Khel, the "Five-and-Nine". How desperate and composed that fight was before the Fore-and-Aft came on again is well instanced by a story told by an old gunner friend of mine who was there. Hordes of fanatical tribesmen sworn to death or victory surrounded the head of the column, whose leading brigade was

deployed. A field battery in action on the flank was none too well escorted. The officer commanding, who was engaged in firing on the main bodies of the Afghans in front, said to his trumpeter :

"Boy, watch those wagons of ours, and tell me if any of those Ghazis get near them."

Presently :

"There's some of those Ghazis getting near the wagons, sir !"

The major took no notice.

"There's a lot of them Ghazis getting near the wagons now, sir, but it's all right. Our old farrier's a-getting at 'em."

Then it was that the Fore-and-Aft came down with the bayonet, Lew and Jakin having shown the way before—a dramatic happening, however, for which no historic instance gives foundation.

All the pathos and tragedy of days is contained in that other short story of the Second Afghan War, *Love o' Women*. The story tells of the first phase thereof, when the troops came back down the Khaiber after the signing of the pie-crust treaty of Gundamuk, through a raging cholera epidemic which was like to the Black Death. The Fly-by-Nights, the 60th Rifles, who were also to be at Ahmed Khel in the second phase of that war, came through, it will be remembered, playing the "Dead March" with their colonel's corpse at their head, and the Highlanders came out of the Khaiber into the plain of Jamrud with their pipes skirling, the pipers "swinging their rumps like buck-rabbits".

Dinah Shadd was there to meet Terence Mulvaney, with Old Pummeloe and the Colonel's wife, too. But that is not the story. The story was of the man with the power of the come-hither who suffered from "locomotus-attacks-us", and how he fell out to die in the arms of a lost white woman in the courtesan quarters of the bazaar.

Many behind the scenes can picture the origin of the story, and one's thoughts are drawn to that mysterious unexplained paragraph in a letter written from the Ridge at Delhi by Major, afterwards Field-Marshal, Sir Henry Norman, acting Adjutant-General of the Army, "A European woman was hung at Meerut yesterday for her share in the Mutiny here." Who? How? Why?

Another mosaic is that fascinating and exciting story of *The Lost Legion*. Now that is the well-known term in history for the famous Ninth Legion, the Legio Hispanica. That body, close on 6000 strong, fully equipped with all arms and ancillary services, marched out of York in A.D. 120 to suppress a rebellion among the powerful tribe of the Brigantes. No trace, no legend,

no survivors have ever been recorded. It is one of history's amazing mysteries.

Kipling takes the name and then proceeds to work into it a well-known frontier raid and the story of the mutinous 55th Bengal Native Infantry. The point of *The Lost Legion* lies in the manner in which a squadron of frontier cavalry is able to get behind and surround a frontier stronghold harbouring outlaws and wolvesheads, cutting off escape to the rear while the main force advances by the direct route. The squadron, while climbing a long stony *ragza* which leads past the watch-towers, has all its arms and chains muffled and is enjoined to make no clatter of hoofs lest the watchers in the tribal towers give the alarm, but suddenly commences to make enough noise to wake the infernal regions. Horses are falling and clattering on all sides, scabbards and spurs are ringing. The officer in command curses those who make the noise ; each man believes it is his neighbour. They pass under a watch-tower, and one watcher calls across to another that the phantom regiment is among them, and vows that *his* ancestors did *not* molest them. The British squadron is approaching, concealed amid the well-known clattering phantoms of a cavalry regiment that walked, a regiment that had mutinied in '57, and had ridden into the tribal hills and called on the tribesmen to rise and slay the British. But the tribes had steadily slain *them*, hunted them from corner to corner, appropriated their arms and saddlery, and sold the survivors as slaves.

It is a brilliant story, and its origin is not the mutiny of a cavalry regiment—none did mutiny on that border—but of the 55th Infantry aforesaid, who were quartered in 1857 in Euzufzai. The Guides had already marched to Delhi to be among the foremost of the avenging force on the Ridge. The 55th from Nowshera had been sent to take their place at Mardan near the Frontier line, leaving a detachment at Nowshera. That detachment mutinied. The authorities in Peshawur promptly sent a flying-column—with which was the redoubtable John Nicholson—to disarm the bulk of the corps. Their Colonel, broken-hearted at the news of the misconduct of his detachment and at the disarmament that was to overtake the rest of his corps, took his own life. The corps broke into mutiny, shot at its officers, seized its colours, and marched off, shakos and red coats and all, to the border, and called on the religious and political leader, the Akundzada of Swat, to join them and make war on the infidel. The Akund *sahib* knew a better game than that ; he and his merry men destroyed it slowly, sweating the fat off their Brahmin *subahdars*, and the hunted survivors were



eventually handed over by the State of Kashmir for punishment. The story of their ghosts haunting the border-side and wailing "Marf karo"—"Mercy! Have pity!"—is an old one and forms the important part of the mosaic of *The Lost Legion*.

That fascinating, swinging *Ballad of East and West*, and the story of the outlaw's boy and the Colonel's son, to be enlisted into the Guides, is built on the story of one Dilawar Khan Khāttāk. It will be remembered how the Colonel's son rode over the border in search of a favourite horse stolen by tribal horse-thieves. He falls into the hands of outlaws, and eventually it is agreed that the head outlaw's son shall go back to be enlisted, and his father says to him, "Belike they will make thee ressaldar when I am hanged in Peshawur." As the lad comes into the Guides' lines a dozen sabres fly from their scabbards at the sight of one with whom many had a blood feud. Then the verse runs :

"Ha' done! Ha' done!" said the Colonel's son.

"Last night ye had struck at a border thief—

Put up the steel at your sides!

Tonight 'tis a man of the Guides!"

Incidentally, it may be remarked that these last lines caused huge delight on the Frontier when they first appeared, as describing, in the judgment of the other Frontier corps, the composition of the Guides with some exactitude. The story of the Dilawar Khan aforesaid is told at length by Sir George Younghusband in his history of the Corps of Guides. In the early days of the British occupation of the Peshawur valley, the Guides were formed under Major Lumsden. Dilawar Khan, a young man of the Khāttāk tribe of Pathans from the banks of the Kabul river, was a notorious wolfshhead and outlaw, famed for every sort of daring deed. To Lumsden it occurred that he was of the type which, if reasonably tamed, would make a good Guide. He sent him an invitation and safe-conduct, and in he came. Lumsden told him that the gallows could be the only termination to his present career, and then offered to enlist him with a free pardon. Dilawar Khan only laughed and rode away, returning to raiding and to his pastime of asking mullahs awkward questions, for he was of an inquiring turn of mind. One fine day he turned up to be enlisted, only stipulating that he would *not* learn the goose-step. Lumsden, however, would not hear of conditions, and then Dilawar Khan enlisted without more demur, so that, as in *East and West* :

"Last night ye had struck at a border thief—

Tonight 'tis a man of the Guides!"

Dilawar Khan rose to be a *subahdar*, acquiring much honour, and actually accepted Christianity, and became a devout and sincere Christian. Sent on secret service to Chitral in his old age, he was imprisoned by the Mehtar, and eventually died in the snow on his way back, a monument of faithfulness.

The *Ford o' Kabul River* is sung of a sad episode of the Second Afghan War, when a squadron of the 10th Hussars, fording the river in the early-morning mist, lost the narrow ford, and many were swept away—"Ford o' Kabul River in the dark".

So much for the Afghan Wars and the North-West Frontier and all that he has sung and much more that might be said. It lives and calls every time I read it. *Wee Willie Winkie* I can see happening, and can smell the keen wind and the asa-foetida, and see the rough tribesmen and the golden-haired lad, and I too have lain out on Greenhow Hill to catch the too-confident sniper.

### *The Burma Side of the Frontier*

But it is to Burma and the long year of jungle fighting that followed the third Burmese War and the dispersal of King Theebaw's army that one's heart turns, as much for memory and charms. Happily there are many alive for whom this memory can still be stirred. After the capture of Mandalay, Theebaw's army had been allowed to break up and take their arms, a height of "political folly", with the result that they all turned dacoit and outlaw, living by raid and robbery, as disbanded armies will.

There are two poems and a story that deal with the war on the Irrawadi and in the rice-fields and bamboo jungles, the teak forests and tinkly temple bells. First among them all is *The Taking of Lungtungpen* told of a detachment of British infantry who swam a river in the Shan States and rushed the defended village "in the buff", which no doubt helped to allay the intense curiosity of the Burmese girls in those early days as to whether or not the *thakins* were white all over. The story is told, I think, of the Hampshire Regiment,<sup>1</sup> and is less of a mosaic than most of the others.

Of poems, or rather verses, there are two—*The Grave of the Hundred Head* and the *Ballad of Boh Da Thone*, both songs redolent of action and the smell of the jungle, the rotting grass, the rice *khet*, and the uplands. Boh Da Thone is typical of those outlaws with a sense of the value of their own skins, who "shot at the strong" with safety and "slashed at the weak" with

<sup>1</sup> Or perhaps the South Wales Borderers, the 24th Foot.

impunity and "filled old ladies with kerosene" to make them reveal the hiding-place of the family savings.

I've never seen an old lady filled with kerosene, but I've marched into a village after a Boh Da Thone, to find the head man crucified at the entrance, just to fill him and his like with terror of the dacoits and prevent the countryside from splitting on them. No cruelty was too cruel—as in the case of Spanish "Reds"—for this jolly loblolly Burman gone wrong to perpetrate on his own folk, men, women or girls, when he had once turned outlaw. Boh Tee and the Wuntho Tsawbwa were my particular pals, and often have I, like "Crook" O'Neil and his Black Tyrone, tramped through the jungle and camped in the byre, and my men, too, have "died in the swamp" and "been tombed in the mire"! It is just a true picture of what has been recurring in Burma four years ago, viz. forty years later, to make a Congress and Soviet holiday. Perhaps it is true that the Government diddered, "first it would and then it wouldn't, and then it smiled and said it couldn't", and waited for the heavy rains to set in before sending troops, just to make it easier for the Black Tyrone.

I too have had a slug in the ulnar bone from a Tower musket at forty yards, with this added joy, however—that a little later I was able to land a seven-pound shell in the gentleman's abdomen, through his stockade and all, which left me two up on the round.

The man who laid the gun also, was called Prag Tiwari, which shows where he came from, and is the same as that of the *subahdar* in *The Grave of the Hundred Head*, of which more anon. The story which Kipling has woven into the *Ballad of Boh Da Thone*, where the fat Bengali commissariat storekeeper asleep in a bullock-cart falls on the Boh and bursts his spleen, actually happened in a convoy in the plains near the bank of the Irrawadi not far from Katha; but the victim was not quite the Boh himself. History does not record the sending of the Boh's head by Value Payable Post, which we call "Cash on Delivery", to O'Neil!

*The Grave of the Hundred Head*, which begins with the simple refrain of the "Widow in Sleepy Chester", tells of another incident, somewhat glorified to make a thriller, of the subaltern killed in ambush and the vengeance taken by his men, a party of twenty of the First Shikaris, with two Indian officers, Subahdar Prag Tiwari and Jemadar Hira Lal. Here the charm to those who know is in the selection of the names, which are typical yet not well known. These Indian officers are both Hindustanis, the first a Tiwari, an Oudh Brahmin, one of the

old Pandey class that so filled the Bengal Army before the Mutiny. In the earlier days of the occupation of Burma there were several Hindustani regiments, now almost extinct, employed. This story really refers, however, to one of the first raised military police battalions to which many of the Hindustani men were drafted. The use of these particular names, so suitable in this particular story, is just another instance of the almost uncanny inner accuracy of Kipling's work, only noticeable to those few who know, but an instance of its astounding completeness, with nothing slurred, thoroughness when there are none or but few to applaud it.

A snider squibbed in the jungle,  
Somebody laughed and fled.

And the party of military police swore vengeance on the dacoits who had shot their British subaltern dead. A hundred dead Burmans from the dacoit village paid the toll. A grim story, my masters, and not on official record—just one of the stories that come in the smoking-room of the Mandalay Club and other places where they gossip.

But one cannot leave Burma without touching on those two other Burman pieces, the beautiful *Mandalay*, before which even Francis Adams bowed low, and *Georgie Porgie*. Only one note has puzzled in *Mandalay*, and that is the allusion to the sunrise and the flying-fishes playing.

An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer China 'crost the Bay !

for as flying-fishes do not play in the Irrawadi and there is no reach of the river that corresponds to such description, this line has always puzzled the more rigid critics. But the solution obviously must be that the lines refer to the Bay of Bengal and the troopship moving east into the rising sun in the Bay of Bengal from Madras or the Hooghly. That would give us flying-fishes as well as the rising sun and still be "on the road to Mandalay", while the line about the "old Flotilla" is perhaps thrown in, as a poet's right, to make it easier.

When the "whacking white cheroot" is carried in a slit in the ear below the white rose in the hair at the side, why, then there is little more to be said about it, and anything might happen, as it did in *Georgie Porgie*, whose story is treated of in the chapter on Women in the East (Chapter XI).

### *The Sudan*

The British Empire on which the sun never sets, and in which the reveille follows the uprising of the sun round the

world, is unfortunately often at war—the lesser wars of the world police, undertaken to protect and open free tradeways, and to kill the slaver trade and the terrorist. You cannot hold the trade of the world without such responsibilities, and the other nations of the world that have grown up later benefit thereby. Nor without such responsibilities could these islands that can but feed twenty million have expanded to forty-five millions unstarved. That is a little plug of baccy for the Little Englanders to smoke in their squeaky pipes. Therefore while Afghan and Burman were arguing with the *Pax Britannica*, there was the pother of Egypt and the muddle of the Sudan on our hands. The business of Egypt's bankruptcy and debt to Europe, with the crowning mercy of Tel-el-Kebir, Kipling has not put in his calendar, save by his amusing ballad *The Jacket*,<sup>1</sup> of the legend of a wild gunner, beloved of the *Pink 'Un* staff as the "Treasure". As an "Origin", it has already been explained. It is of Tel-el-Kebir, where

Through the plagues of Egypt' we was chasin' Arabi,  
Gettin' down an' shovin' in the sun;

"an' the Arabites was loosin' 'igh and wide". And the limber-boxes that should have held case-shot held brandies and liqueurs.

But it was not until the Gordon muddle, and the struggles to cross the desert in the face of the tribes stirred by the Mahdi and Khalifa, that Kipling begins to give us the war colour. In the tragic finale of *The Light That Failed*, blind Dickie Helder lies down in the armoured train and listens to the rifle-bullets on the iron trucks and the rattle of the gatling in colour that will be needed by history. The fury of the Arab rush on the billowing square is deep in the brighter, redder-hued description.

But it was the enchanted music-hallism of *Fuzzy-Wuzzy* that delighted the public and sent them singing it for months. The magic doggerel intoxicated, and doggerel with a difference it was; so different from the staid relation of Bernard the Treasurer, aforementioned, and the ways of the same Arabs and Kurds, with the Crusader, whose swords, by the way, Fuzzy-Wuzzy still wielded. Fuzzy-Wuzzy especially applies to the hairy heads of the Haddendowa whom Osman Digna led round Suakin to hamper the Berber-Suakin railway in its slow attempt to reach Gordon in Khartoum.

'E rushes at the smoke when we let drive,  
An' before we know, 'e's 'ackin' at our 'ead;  
E's all 'ot sand and ginger when alive,  
An' 'e's generally shammin' when 'e's dead.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Jacket*, as all the world should know—save that knowledge fades before petrol—is slang for service in the Horse Artillery.

And that was Atkins's view of our friends who massacred Gordon and all in Khartoum, and who turned the Sudan into a triple hell till Kitchener saved it, and started the happy prosperous régime of today. (Young writers in loose trousers, listen to the song.)

Of the inauguration of that happy era, the start of the College at Khartoum immediately after the destruction of Khalifa and his slaving friends, Kipling sings in *Kitchener's School*. This, seemingly, is a translation from the verse of a Moslem schoolmaster with an Indian regiment of the contingent that came to Suakin to see to the said Haddendowa. This is how that Moslem writes to his co-religionists after Lord Kitchener had won the victory of Omdurman.

Not at the mouth of his clean-lipped guns shall ye learn his name again,  
But letter by letter, from *Kaf* to *Kaf*, at the mouths of his chosen men.

He has gone back to his own city, not seeking presents or bribes,  
But openly asking the English for money to buy you *Hakims*<sup>1</sup> and scribes.

For Allah created the English mad—the maddest of all mankind!  
Behold they clap the slave on the back, and behold he ariseth a man!

It was after this, when the prisoners of war were enlisted into the Sudanese Corps of the Sudan Defence Force, that Kipling wrote *Pharaoh and the Sergeant*, but it applied still more to the reforming of the Gypsie Army in 1884, after the disaster that overtook the Fellah Army before the Mahdi's *shahids*. They have not yet made a brave man of the muscular yet timorous Egyptian giant, but they have made him a disciplined, contented soldier for the lesser purposes.

Said England unto Pharaoh, "I must make a man of you,  
That will stand upon his feet and play the game;  
That will Maxim his oppressor as a Christian ought to do,"  
And she sent old Pharaoh Sergeant Whatsisname.

Said England unto Pharaoh, "Though at present singing small,  
You shall hum a proper tune before it ends,"  
And she introduced old Pharaoh to the Sergeant once for all,  
And left 'em in the desert making friends.

Sergeant Whatsisname has indeed been the principal factor in the Army, but still more in the Egyptian Police, in clearing up the sinks of iniquity and vice of the *ancien régime*.

Thus, as written of later, the war epics are part of that chronological testimony of the doings and spirit of our last fifty years in the robust side of our development that is so remarkable a factor in the Kipling saga.

<sup>1</sup> *Hakim*—teacher.

*South Africa*

And when we come to South Africa, the only one of our lesser wars in which Rudyard Kipling was present in person, then first-hand sense of colour is joined to power and dramatic sense there, more than ever, can those who know it, realize.

The smell of the wattle at Lichtenberg, riding in in the rain.

There are several stories—such as *The Comprehension of Private Copper*, *The Captive*, and *A Sahib's War*—that tell of the War on the Veld, and a few sets of verses, notably "*M.I.*", *Lichtenberg*, *Stellenbosch*, *The Half Ballad of Waterval*, *Piet*, *The Veld*, and the *Lesson*. The old Thomas Atkins the regular, Tim Flinnagan the militiaman and 'Arry 'Otspur the yeoman, as they were in the first generation of the short-service Army, stand before us. The War began with one battalion of mounted infantry, and ended with twenty-two, and at the end there was not much the English Afrikaner could teach the "*M.I.*"; but you cannot take Atkins from the crowded town life of modern Britain and expect him to compete in irregular warfare with the veld Dutch or the wonderful British settler who formed some of the earlier "*Colonial*" irregular corps.

As the war drew on and the supply of these latter was exhausted, the *M.I.* and the Yeomanry soon became quite as good, if not better, at the game than the later corps raised locally,<sup>1</sup> whose personnel were often town-bred English serving in business houses in South Africa, or had come out as stewards on ships—gallant enough but green. In "*M.I.*", the "*Ruddy Ikonas*", we have the very essence of Atkins, disciplined but irregular. They were drawn by companies from many corps, even the good old "*Millish*", hence :

I used to be in the Yorkshires once  
(Sussex, Lincolns, and Rifles once),  
Hampshires, Glosters and Scottish once ! (*ad lib.*)  
But now I am *M.I.*

In the years of the Empire to come, this poem—for poem it truly is—will give the glamour of local conditions and colour when all trace of this confiding age is past. Had some Kipling written of the Crusaders, and of the men who led the boys of Hampshire, Sussex and Lincoln to Judaea, what colour we should have ! Now we often fail to realize that the gentlemen with their ladies whose effigied feet rest on their stone dogs on the old churches differ so little from ourselves. The story of Bernard the Treasurer (*anglice* Pay-Cutter) of the disaster of "*The Horns of Hatin*", might thus live more readily for us.

<sup>1</sup> The original Colonial Corps were beyond price, but they faded away after a while.

"Our Adjutant's late of Somebody's Horse, and a Melbourne auctioneer", was prophetic enough of the men of Sinai in the World War. "Ask for the London Ikonas." . . . *Ikona*, Kaffir for "there ain't none", the frequent reply to questions, took the imagination of the soldiery, as did *Mashibo* of similar import appeal to the troops in Burma, when "Mashibo hat", or whatever it might be, became the Atkins adjective for "Burmese"!—as *Imshi* for the Mesopotamian Arab.

*Two Kopjes* is not a very well-known set of verses, but it "gets" you, with the smell of the veld, the raw-red *vlei* grass, and the aromatic *karoo* plants that bruise under the gunwheels. The burden is the silent, peaceful kopje that looks so inoffensive and on which an ambush lurks to do in the townie and the young soldier.

Only a Kensington draper,  
Only pretending to scout . . .  
Only bad news for the paper,  
Only another knock-out.

Alas! the Kensington draper has had to carry a burden far greater since, but in many ways easier, in that the passage over the top was *en masse*, with your comrades around you, and not the veld patrol, amid scenes that should tell you everything, but whose language you cannot read.

There is a bitter note which in those days was not always untrue :

For all that we knew in the columns  
And all they've forgot on the staff.

The staff are always an object of jest be they never so good, as must all taskmasters be, and Kipling rubs this well in, in that significant canto *The Instructor*.

"The flying bullet down the pass that whistles clear, all flesh is grass", but which he here calls, "Old Nickel Neck, 'oo isn't on the staff"—the Mauser bullet, and its ghost the Mauser bird, the lark whose note and flutter made you duck your head. *Stellenbosch* has always been a favourite, recalling the troop depot near Cape Town, to the command of which the incompetent were relegated, and whose pretty Dutch name has come into the English tongue as the name for "dismissal". There is nothing new in it. Every war has a similar jest. In the Peninsula it was called "to join the Belem Rangers", to be among those who hung about the esplanade and wine-shops of the base at Belem. In the World War it was to "get the bowler hat", the privilege of wearing plain clothes in England, and the French equivalent—"dégommé" (ungummed, or unstuck)—has also been



adopted into our language and may remain. If we look through the English vocabulary we shall see how every war for many generations has enriched the language, the slang of one generation becoming the phrase of the next. Probably in the Crusades you were sent to the Wine Depot at Cyprus, or somewhere equally satirical.

One must not pass from South Africa without reference to *The Captive*, the story of the enterprising American with a patent gun which he offered to the Boers. After many months of hunting one of those ponderous columns which at one time tried to suppress the guerilla warfare that arose after the first surrender, he was captured. While a prisoner awaiting transport by rail, he was called by a fellow-countryman "a dam' gun-running Yank", on the grounds that the British were fighting for freedom and progress. This story is referred to at more length in discussing Kipling's studies of America.

It is good to remember what Piet was like—poor Piet, "is trouses to his knees", but a nasty sniper. In the Kipling song Atkins found Piet dying and stayed alone with him to the end—"is carcase past rebellion, and 'is eyes inquiring why".

I mind it well, the Boer who looked so fierce on the kopje and so small when you buried him; and once I stayed behind my column to help a farmer's wife bury a woman who had died in childbirth, whose husband was a prisoner with Cronje at St. Helena these twelve months and more. The unkindest cut was that as my men lowered the coffin-ropes, the commando came up and began to snipe. I can see the blue distance of the Transvaal scrub out towards the Dry Hartz as I write, the white farm and the hasty grave, and hear the *pac-boc* of the Mauser, and see, too, the geese that once were Commandant Tolly de Boer's hanging from the saddle-bow of some of my artillery *swartzritters*. Perhaps the bullets were to avenge them, and not to harry the burial-party. *À la guerre comme à la guerre*. As I see it and feel it, so has Mr. Kipling conjured the scenes and scents into his verses, which strike to melody these broken strings of the old wars. Of them it may perhaps be said that the "leaves of the trees were for the healing of the nations".

As magnificent journalism, the letters that appeared in the *Daily Express* are always worth reading. One of them reappears in the guise of the story *The Way that He Took*, and is full of ideas on guerilladom which the British officer should study.

### *A Campaigning Phrase Book*

Years ago, about 1894, there appeared in *The Fog-Horn* of Cawnpore, a paper of *Pink 'Un* type, run by two subalterns, the

following "Phrase Book", which was republished by Kipling's permission, having appeared earlier in *The Pioneer*, Oct. 23rd, 1888. It will appeal to soldiers, especially to officers who know the Atkins Hindustani, and some extracts are given.

# A CAMPAIGNING PHRASE BOOK

Who is this person ?

*Kone O, tum yonder ?*

Where is the enemy ?

*Kidderabouts Paythan ?*

Is he in that nullah ?

*Nullah mallum ? Kooch anybody there hai ?*

Is he behind that mountain ?

*Lumber hull woller junter ? T'other side ooper hai ?*

Is he in force ?

*Kitna them beggars ?*

Is he going to fight ?

*Shindy ho jaiga ?*

You are not a Malik, and I cannot treat with you.

*Mullick be damned hai ! Orf'cer ke pars ow, an' 'e'll mullick yer !*

Be good enough to stop.

*Hi yi ! Tyro ! Halt there ! Banto or I'll blow yer hugly 'ead orf !*

Drop your gun at once.

*Bundook let go, shippy.*

I am not going to kill you.

*Hum nay marega.*

(To private of a Gurkha Regiment) : Kindly direct me to the refreshments.

*Hi you, Johnny ! Canteen kidder ? Come along.*

I am hungry.

*Khanna hai ? Grub got it ? All right, chupatti'll do.*

I want a sheep.

*Baba manhta. Ba-ba !*

Have you got a fat sheep ? I will pay for it.

*Baba not hai ? Paisa hai. Kissiwasty no baba ? D'you take me for a chor ?*

Why do you fly from me ?

*Kyko cuttin' about ither-uther ? Phere ow ! I ain't gorn' to marrow you.*

Take your women away from this place.

*Nickle-jow bibi-log. Pulton owega. Ah ! bhat laoad you.*

Are you wounded ? I will get you water.

*Bullet got it, inside 'im ? Boat acchy ! Hum pani hai. Tum bait.*

Put up your hands.

*Chor do that chury. Ooper you—your sneakin' 'ands ! Issimafik !  
More ooper, or you don't get no pani !*

You must not shoot at a man who is giving you water when you are wounded.

*Dekko ! Yee bundook hai : yee your big thick head hai ; yee pani hai.  
Now which'll you 'ave ?*

You must come into camp as my prisoner.

*Sung ow ! Isturruf ! Quick march, Paythan. Tum puckrow hai.  
Tum puckrower. Iswasti chello !*

There is a camel ; load him up.

*Hi ! Dekko this old 'ummin'-bird oont ! Uski portmanteau pack  
kurro.*

Does he always make this disgusting noise ?

*Ham'sher bubbly squeak bolter ? Wot a jarnwar !*

The camels are blocking the path of the infantry.

*Hi you oont-wollers argee ! 'Ole bloomin' campaign kiwasty 'ere baitega ?  
Charing Cross nay hai ; picnic nay hai ? Hokee chell !*

This campaign is now concluded.

*Can't you larrai kurro no better than this jat ? Hum barrick ko jaiger  
Tum choop or we'll be back phere an' make you sit ooper, Salaum !*

## CHAPTER VIII

### KIPLING AND THE SEA SERVICES

Down to the Sea in Ships—A Fleet in Being—Their Majesties' Navy—*The Ship that Found Herself*

#### *Down to the Sea in Ships*

THOSE first years of travel, after his fame had reached the outer world, brought Kipling his sea sense ; and the sea and those who go down to the sea in ships were at once admitted into the fraternities with whom his soul shared sympathy. The love first began with the trade shipping and its ways, before he discovered His Majesty's Navy and made it more his own than the Army. Some of these earlier travel tales have been referred to. They pay as great a tribute to his versatility as do his stories with new subjects written in England or America. There is *The Disturber of Traffic*, already referred to, with the mad lighthouse-keeper ; or the fierce 'tween-decks tragedy told in *The Limitations of Pambe Serang*,<sup>1</sup> or *The Lang Men o' Larut*,<sup>1</sup> born of communion with chief engineers. Then we have *The Ballad of the Bolivar*, which annoyed Francis Adams, born of some story of coffin-ships and the like, and the old evil, rough days of the tramp service :

Racketing her rivets loose, smoke-stack white as snow,  
All the coals adrift a-deck, half the rails below,  
Leaking like a lobster-pot, steering like a dray—  
Out we took the *Bolivar*, out across the Bay !

And then you remember they passed and cheered a liner in grim sarcasm and grit :

Once we saw between the squalls, lyin' head to swell  
Some damned liner's lights go by like a grand hotel,  
Cheered her from the *Bolivar* swampin' in the sea.

Then we have *The Mary Gloster*, with all the lore of the ship-owner of an outside line that it shows ; *Mulholland's Contract* tells of the man in charge of a deck-load of frightened cattle.

The fear was on the cattle, for the gale was on the sea,  
An' the pens broke up on the lower deck an' let the creatures free—

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<sup>1</sup> *Life's Handicap*.

And so Mulholland made a contract with the Almighty :

An' I spoke to God of our Contract, an' He says to my prayer,  
 "I never puts on My ministers no more than they can bear.  
 So back you go to the cattle-boats an' preach My Gospel  
 there !"

"They must quit drinkin' and swearin', they mustn't knife on a  
 blow,  
 They must quit gamblin' their wages, and you must preach it so ;  
 For now those boats are more like Hell than anything else I  
 know."

That was in 1894, and we can see where Kipling's sympathies were, then as ever.

If you know the old church by the Kashmir Gate at Delhi you may know the story men tell ; how old James Skinner built it in accordance with his vow when he lay wounded on a Central India battlefield. His nickname was "Old Sekunder", and the church is "Old Sekunder's Contract". The legend also says that he built a mosque and a Hindu temple ; you see, his mother was a Rajputni, his father a British officer, and he was not quite sure which contract he might be serving under, and the God of Battles might be multiple.

The ballads of the sea now come frequently from this pen that is arresting the attention of the Empire and the United States. The sea, the rivers, and the longshore haunts have drawn him as deeply as the Martini, the screw-gun, and the men who fight for civilization on the marches. But he has realized that on the sea you are fighting something all the time and not only on occasion, and all his virility stirred at that, and his lyrical realization poured forth. The remarkable *Sestina of the Tramp Royal* has been touched on for its craft elsewhere :

#### THE COASTWISE LIGHTS

Through the endless summer evenings, on the lineless, level floors ;  
 Through the yelling Channel tempest when the siren hoots and roars.

The coastwise lights of England give you welcome back again !

or the *Song of the Red War Boat*, or *The Long Trail* :

You have heard the beat of the off-shore wind,  
 And the thresh of the deep-sea rain.

#### *A Fleet in Being*

In 1892, before he had met Mr. Pyecroft or written *Their Lawful Occasions*, the big guns in the service of the battleships

and Gibraltar Rock were in trouble. The steel-makers could not yet make steel to stand the terrific heat that developed in a modern breechloader, and the long barrels of the big guns drooped slightly from the horizontal, while the great fat Woolwich Infants laughed thereat.

There was a Press scandal, though it was no one's fault, but a fact, and Kipling wrote *The Ballad of the Clampherdown*, which name some folk will know as a parody of *Camperdown*, the great naval occasion and title :

It was our war-ship *Clampherdown*  
Would sweep the Channel clean.

She had one bow gun of a hundred ton,  
And a great stern gun beside.

She met with a hostile light cruiser.

And once she fired and twice she fired,  
Till the bow-gun drooped like a lily tired  
That lolls upon the stalk.

And a little later the great stern turret stuck, so she closed on her foe in the ancient way, as the hostile cruiser bade her strike, and the order was, "Out cutlasses and board !"

It was our warship *Clampherdown*,  
Spewed up four hundred men ;  
And the scalded stokers yelled delight,  
As they rolled in the waist and heard the fight,  
Stamp o'er their steel-walled pen.

Which, whether it was right or whether it was wrong, had the good old English ring, and was a fitting introduction to Mr. Pyecroft and the "young gentlemen".

*A Fleet in Being* came out not long after Kipling had developed his sea sense. We have had one form of his experience of manœuvre at sea in *Their Lawful Occasions*, but this is more a superior appreciative narrative than a story of his trip with the Channel fleet. Just as the verve and discipline of a regiment appealed to him, so came his experience of the fleet, and it is to be remembered that this was written thirty-nine years ago.

"I had some dim knowledge of the interior of a warship, but none of the new world into which I stepped, from a Portsmouth wherry, one wonderful summer evening in '97.

"With the exception of the Captain, the Chief Engineer and maybe a few petty officers, nobody was more than twenty-eight years old. They ranged in the ward-room from this resourceful age to twenty-six or -seven, clear-cut, clean-shaved young faces with all manner of varied experience behind them. When one comes to think,

it is only just that a light 20-knot cruiser should be handled, under guidance of an older head, by affable young gentlemen prepared, even sinfully delighted, to take chances not set down in books."

All of which reads rather up-to-date.

Fleets, even the great fleet of 1897, soon pass into the limbo of the out-of-date. In 1915 a magnificent fleet attacked the Dardanelles beside which that of 1897 was ludicrous. Yet there was not one vessel, save borrowed *Queen Elizabeth*, whose loss mattered. Modern war strength lay in the vital North Sea. Now that great fleet that won Jutland is *démodé* beyond belief, thanks to the curse of the modern inventor. Therefore to follow Kipling through his joy and even technical grip of the fleet essential in 1897 would be hardly intelligible, save for his glory in the never-changing personnel. But those who remember the Jutland story of the two stokers coming out of the bowels of the sinking ship in deep discussion: "Well, all I can say is, Bill, that you oughter marry the girl," will appreciate *Omdurman*.

"One peaceful morning the Yeoman of Signals came to the Captain's cabin at the regulation pace, but with heightened colour and an eye something brighter than usual. 'Signal from the flagship, sir. . . . Omdurman fallen: killed, so many; and wounded, so many.' Said the Captain, 'Tell the men.' On this, I went forward to see how the news would be received. We were busy painting some deckhouses, and the work continued to an accompaniment of subdued voices, the hushed tones of men under authority. The hum rose perhaps about half a note. Said one, dipping deep in the white lead, 'Um, ah! This ought to make the French sickish, almost 'ear them coughin', carn't you?' Said another, reaching out for the broadest and slabbiest brush, 'Say, Alf, lend us that Khartoum brush o' yours.' After a long pause, stepping back to catch the effect of a peculiarly juicy stroke—head a little aside and one eye shut: 'Well, we've waited about long enough, 'avn't we?' Bosun's mate with a fine mixture of official severity, and a human tolerance: 'What *are* you cackling over there for! Carry on quiet, can't you'; and that was how we took the news of the little skirmish called *Omdurman*."

Once again is the chronology shown, and there is also some light on another tragedy, that of South Wales in particular. Just as the 1897 Grand Manœuvres were in progress, there was a strike in the steam-coal fields of South Wales. That strange

Welsh character which makes the men peculiarly susceptible to unwise leaders in season and out, with reason, and too often without, hastened its own disaster. The unreliable moods of miners in general and Wales in particular undoubtedly pre-disposed all concerned to take to oil. The Navy took the lesson to heart disastrously for the miner, quite apart from the extra power and range of action that oil was to give.

### *Their Majesties' Navy*

Since Kipling first discovered intimately the Sea Services, in the days of the old Queen, and dealt faithfully with the same till after the World War, we may expect difference and variety in the personnel as well as in methods and armament and services. But, as with the soldiery, the essence of the characters of these our servants is an abundance—as within ourselves if circumstances call forth—of staunchness, adventure, pride of endurance and humour. That is our characteristic, in this mixed race that is older than Norman and Saxon and Dane, and which dates from matters that sent the Parisi, leaving the Humber, to sail the Seine and found Paris, or the Brigands, leaving Lake Constance, to sail the Rhine into Northumbria.

It is in *Traffics and Discoveries* that we find four stories, something the parallel of *Soldiers Three*, which speak for the Silent Service with the trumpet of admiration. He begins by picking up a yarn and developing it *more suo*, in *The Bonds of Discipline*, which is worth reading for the delightful tosh when a French spy ships as a Madeira Portuguese anxious to avoid conscription, and is smuggled away in a boat on the davits of H.M.S. *Archimandrite* off Funchal. He had written a book about it and the wild indiscipline that was the habit of the British Navy! So Kipling, wanting to get at the true story, took a third-class ticket to Plymouth in search of knowledge—which meant finding someone of that ship's company.

"I gathered information on the way from a leading stoker, two seaman-gunners, and an odd hand in a torpedo factory. . . . They courteously . . . led me through the alleys of Devonport, to a public-house not fifty yards from the water. We drank with the proprietor, a huge yellowish man called Tom Wessels. . . . I asked if he could produce any warrant or petty officer of the *Archimandrite*. 'The Bedlamite, d'you mean? 'er last commission when they all went crazy?'

"'Shouldn't wonder,' I replied. 'Fetch me a sample and I'll see.'



"'You'll excuse me, o' course, but what d'you want 'im for?'"

"'I want to make him drunk. I want to make you drunk . . . —if you like. I want to make him drunk here.'"

"'Spoke very 'andsome. I'll do what I can.' . . . I gathered from the pot-boy that he was a person of influence beyond admirals. In a few minutes I heard the noise of an advancing crowd and the voice of Mr. Wessels.

"' 'E only wants to make you drunk at 'is expense. Dessay 'e'll stand you all a drink . . . 'E don't bite.'"

"A square man, with remarkable eyes, entered at the head of six large blue-jackets."

And finally the author in search of information :

"'I will take this *Archimandrite*,' I said, 'and this Marine. Will you please give the boat's crew a drink now and another in half an hour . . . if Mr.——'"

"'Pyecroft,' said the square man, 'Emmanuel Pyecroft, second-class petty officer.'"

"'—Mr. Pyecroft doesn't object.'"

"' 'E don't. Clear out. . . .'"

So that is how Kipling first met Mr. Pyecroft, the Mulvaney of the sea, a Mulvaney with the chill off, and the tang on, and more status and education than ever the man who was corporal wanst. We need not pursue him through the story of the permission of the Captain to bamboozle the Frenchman, who was perhaps a spy. The Frenchman wrote it all in that comic book that had set Kipling on his quest. If you know it, chuckle again to yourselves, and if you don't, read the story thankfully. The method was to translate to Mr. Pyecroft the extracts from the French book and ask him for the explanation. He got it.

Incidentally be it remarked this was a generation ago, when, as explained already, soldiers and sailors themselves drank far more than now. When the writer of this study was a captain of a battery at Gosport a journey along the South Coast meant an hospitable tar by the window, with a bottle of spirits inside his vest, which it was essential to sample. Now the tar is there, but not the bottle, save only that a few years ago a matelot had a suitcase full, from which he insisted on two general officers drinking at six in the morning on the way from Rosslare ; but that was in Ireland, where they go on leave, and it was only Bass.

Having made the acquaintance of Mr. Pyecroft and all that he stood for, he was not to be let go, and the *Bonds of*

*Discipline* gives place to *Their Lawful Occasions*. In the belief that there must still be many—and more growing up—who are not properly grounded in the nation's great interpreter, we may give a few of the gems from this story of humour and, perhaps, of some faint satire, for the Navy, like the Army, has its weak joints, where the arrow may get home. *Their Lawful Occasions* was prefaced by verse, *The Wet Litany*, that dwelt on the horrors and difficulties in the Channel and the North Sea, which before Jutland and the impermeable blockade was also known as the German Ocean.

This is how it begins :

When the waters' countenance  
 Blurs 'twixt glance and second glance ;  
 When the tattered smokes forerun  
 Ashen-ed neath a silver sun ;

Hear the Channel Fleet at sea ;  
*Libera nos, Domine !*

When the treble thickness spread  
 Swallows up our next ahead ;

Hear the Channel Fleet at sea ;  
*Libera nos, Domine !*

This is how it befell that Kipling, accredited as guest to the Blue Fleet, missed H.M.S. *Caryatid*—since orders had been changed—was hailed as friend by his enemies, and, after many invitations, accepted that from the Blue *Pedantic* (15,000 tons), a big vessel for those days, but before boarding her went aside to buy a toothbrush from a chemist.

"As I turned to go, one entered seeking alleviation of a gumboil. He was dressed in a checked ulster, a black silk hat three sizes too small, cord breeches, boots, and pure brass spurs. These he managed painfully, stepping like a prisoner fresh from leg-irons. As he adjusted the pepper-plaster to the gum, the light fell on his face, and I recognized Mr. Emmanuel Pyecroft . . . following me out of the shop, who said hollowly : 'What might you be doing here ?'

" 'I am going on manœuvres in the *Pedantic*,' I replied.

" 'Ho !' said Mr. Pyecroft. 'An' what manner of manœuvres d'you expect to see in a blighted cathedral like the *Pedantic* ? I know 'er. . . . Manœuvres ! You won't see more than "Man an' arm watertight doors !" in your little woollen undervest. . . . War's declared at midnight. *Pedantics* be sugared ! Buy an 'am an' see life !' "

The point of it was that No. 267 torpedo-boat had been commissioned from the Reserve but was not ready to go out with the Blue Fleet. Mr. Moorshed, aged nineteen, in command, "who was leaving the Service next year", intended to take literally his Admiral's fierce orders to go to hell as every sort of disgrace, and run his blooming manœuvres himself.

Mr. Moorshed was, therefore, in disguise, with all the rest of his crew, all among their adversaries' vessels, and intended to act in his own youthful idea of what might be suitable and fair in war. Pyecroft had made the crew green with envy by adding brass spurs to his get-up.

Mr. Moorshed, aged nineteen, with a fortune due at twenty-one, disguised in jersey, mumbles to Pyecroft, who gives a report as to the movements of Red cruisers, and then says to Kipling, "Won't you go aboard? Mr. Moorshed 'ud like someone to talk to. You buy an 'am and see life."

Mr. Moorshed, however, is not "forthcoming", and does not want a ham, but Kipling goes off and purchases both the ham and a good deal of tinned stuff besides. As he draws near the disguised destroyer he hears Pyecroft say to his officer :

" 'Asn't the visitor come aboard, Sir? 'E told me he'd purposely abandoned the *Pedantic* for the pleasure of the trip with us. Told me he was official correspondent for *The Times*; an' I know he's littery by the way 'e tries to talk Navy-talk. Haven't you seen 'im, Sir? "

The long and short of it was that Mr. Moorshed was propitiated and invited Kipling to come along.

" 'Have you known Mr. Pyecroft long? " said my host.

" 'Met him once, a year ago, at Devonport. What do you think of him? "

" 'What do *you* think of him? "

" 'I've left the *Pedantic* . . . her boat will be waiting for me at ten o'clock, simply because I happened to meet him.' "

That cleared the air, and the officer said :

" 'You didn't happen to hear what Frankie [the Admiral] told me from the flagship, did you? His last instructions, and I've logged 'em here in shorthand, were . . . "Get out of this, and conduct your own damned manœuvres in your own damned Tinker fashion ! You're a disgrace to the Service and your boat's offal ! " ' "

Then we meet another of Kipling's heroes. There is a sound of uninterrupted hammering . . . and now and then a hiss of steam. Pyecroft introduces the absent Hinchcliffe.

" 'That's Mr. Hinchcliffe,' said Pyecroft. 'He's what is called a first-class engine-room-artificer. If you hand 'im a drum of oil an' leave 'im alone, he can coax a stolen bicycle to do typewriting.' "

The story now proceeds nefariously to tell how the 267, calling herself the *Gnome*, steals out and comes on a bevy of destroyers, and succeeds in getting the Red signal codes from them, Mr. Pyecroft going aboard to get it, and hears incidentally that two large Red cruisers, *Cryptic* and *Devolution*, are ordered to Torbay to repair some unexpected defects, Moorshed decides to try and torpedo them. In the meantime, by help of the code, they give false orders to the destroyers to get far away, and generally muck up everything they can. They foul the bowsprit of a Brixham trawler, but offer to tow her into Torbay free, and promise the old man rum. The old man comes aboard in frock-coat and sea-boots, but is not taking any humbug, though loving the Navy rum.

Finally he up and speaks, after they have tried to tell him what they want. What the skipper says is a joy for its Devon dialect and way of expression.

Moorshed has offered him a fiver to help him deceive the cruisers ; says he :

" 'Lard ! What's fivers to me, young man ? My nevvvy he likes 'em ; but I do cherish more on fine drink than filthy lucre [Kipling had mixed Curaçao with the Navy rum] any day o' God's good weeks. Leave goo my arm, yeou common sailorman ! I tall 'ee, gentlemen, I baint the ram-faced, ruddle-nosed old fule yeou reckon I be. Before the mast I've fared in my time ; fisherman I've been since I seed the unsense of sea dangerin'. Baccy and spirits . . . yiss, and cigars too I've run a-plenty. I'm no blind harse or boy to be coaxed with your forty-mile free towin' and rum atop of all. There's none more sober to Brixham this tide, I don't care who 'tis, than me. *I* know—*I* know. Yander'm two great King's ships. You'm wishful to sink, burn, and destroy they while us kips them busy sellin' fish. No need tall me so twanty taimе over. . . . Us'll fine 'em if us has to break our fine new bowsprit so close as Crump's Bull's horn ! . . . Put I in dinghy again.' "

And before long Pyecroft and others were putting the torpedoed mark on *Devolution* and *Cryptic* while the Brixham trawler made play and chat.

After a good deal of it and day has dawned, Captain Malan,

*Devolution*, begins telling Captain Panke, *Cryptic*, of the marks on her side, and *Cryptic* is soon returning the compliment, as whalers are lowered and examination is made. But there was fear in Moorshed's heart that they might wipe out his mark, and he flings himself into his dinghy and hurries to make himself known.

The scenes on the torpedoed ships between the captains and young Moorshed are inimitable. Malan is a sportsman and sees the humour; Panke would have made an ass of himself, and the final explanations are made in Captain Panke's cabin before Malan sends 267's men back, and takes off Moorshed to breakfast. The marine sentry on the gangway implores Pyecroft to tell him what has happened, speaking in lip language, and Pyecroft replies :

" 'Tell? You? Your ultimate illegitimate grandchildren might begin to understand, not you—nor never will.' "

" 'Can you do it, Sir?' said Pyecroft at the foot of the ladder. . . . 'I don't think I can, but I'll try. If it takes me two years, I'll try.' "

*Steam Tactics* is hardly a naval story save that it introduces our naval friends Pyecroft and Hinchcliffe, on leave ashore, when Kipling in his steam-car—it was the early days of motor-ing, and he was always a car enthusiast—runs into them. Hinchcliffe and Kipling's engineer—that was before we called 'em chauffeurs—soon fell into deep alliance, with much talk on intimate details of their science. But the real point in this story is the marooning of an insulting and over-officious local constable of the old speed-trap type.

As in *The Village that Voted*, Pyecroft and Hinchcliffe make glorious play with him, and at length "Robert", who orders them to take him to the police-station, is taken for a ride at breakneck pace, down deep glens and between bogs, to be landed miles from home in a gentleman's private "Whip-snade", and is last seen on his knees praying for deliverance amid diving beavers and roaming zebras and kangaroos. There are other interludes, such as the arrival on the scene of a Mr. Kysh and his chauffeur, and a transfer to a bigger, faster car, which leaves Hinchcliffe still more transfixed with profound admiration. He sums up petrol, "'Tain't as sweet as steam, o' course; but for power it's twice the *Furious* against half the *Jaseur* in a head sea."

As a final jeer before the finale, Pyecroft slaps Constable Robert on the knee: "Two hundred miles from 'ome and Mother and faithful Fido tonight, Robert! Cheer up! Why, I've known a destroyer do less."

*Mrs. Bathurst*—another Pyecroft story of sinister ending—has been quoted already as an example of Kipling's joy in new phenomena.

The succeeding years brought much sea verse and drama to the fore, while *Judson and the Empire*<sup>1</sup> is a different matter of marine life, being the adventures of a flat-bottomed gunboat on one of the African rivers.

In *The Day's Work* comes that remarkable *tour de force* *The Ship that Found Herself*, one of those earlier demonstrations of Kipling's gift of marking intimate technicalities sufficiently to write brilliantly of them. It is a newly launched vessel that, like a new car, must "run herself in". If you have observed, as so few do, how the author of *Job* introduces his story, you will see how Kipling has copied the gambit.

Satan has presented himself at God's Durbar, and the Almighty inquires what he has been up to lately, and Satan replies, "From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it." And then God asks him if he sees his wonderful servant Job "a perfect and upright man". Then comes the sneer when Satan replies, "Does Job serve God for naught?"—and so forth.

How very similar is the device by which the new ship is given over to Kipling to rack and to describe.

This is the manner of the gambit, "A modern tramp—the *Dimbula*—with every economic invention to save cargo space and to lessen overhead charges, is launched by the daughter of the Scottish owner, and now she was ready to sail and take in her cargo. Miss Frazier again comes aboard, and walks delightedly among the newly painted decks and tarred winches.

"'And now,' said Miss Frazier, delightedly, to the captain, 'she's a real ship, isn't she? . . .'"

"'Oh, she's no so bad,' the skipper replied cautiously, less enthusiastically than the Almighty spoke of Job.

"'But I'm saying that it takes more than christenin' to mak' a ship. In the nature o' things, Miss Frazier, if ye follow me, she's just iron and rivets and plates put into the form of a ship. She has to find herself yet. . . .'" Mr. Buchanan, the Chief Engineer, was coming towards them. 'I'm sayin' to Miss Frazier, here, that our little *Dimbula* has to be sweetened yet, and nothin' but a gale will do it. How's all wi' your engines, Buck?"

"'Well enough—true by plumb an' rule . . . but there's

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<sup>1</sup> *Many Inventions.*

no spontaneecity yet. . . . Take my word for it, Miss Frazier, and maybe ye'll comprehend later ; even after a pretty girl's christened a ship, it does not follow that there's such a thing as a ship under the men that work her.' "

That is the prologue, and now the good *Dimbula* takes the sea, and the parts of the ship talk to us—capstan, stringers, the high-pressure cylinder ; and the "Huraaaar ! Brraaaaah ! Brrrrp !" as the steam roars through the foghorn till the decks quiver. "Don't be frightened below. It's only me, just throwing out a few words, in case anyone happens to be rolling around tonight." And then the ship gives a supple little waggle, like a perfectly balanced golf-club. How many of us lying on the saloon seats know that "supple little waggle" !

They were sixteen days at sea, bad weather all the way till close to New York.

"The *Dimbula* picked up her pilot, and came in covered with salt and red rust. Her funnel was dirty grey from top to bottom ; the boats had been carried away ; three copper ventilators looked like hats after a fight with the police ; the bridge had a dimple in the middle of it ; the house that covered the steam steering-gear was split as with hatchets. . . . The steam capstan had been badly wrenched on its bed. . . . Altogether, as the skipper said, 'It was a pretty general average. But she's soupled,' he said. . . . 'Ye mind that last blow off the Banks ? I am proud of her, Buck !'

" 'It's vera good,' said the Chief Engineer, looking along the dishevelled decks. 'Now a man judging superfecially would say we were a wreck, but we know otherwise—by experience.' "

And the *Dimbula* went down past the line of great ships congratulating herself. They took little notice of her, the *Touraine* saying, "Owi", with a little coquettish flicker of steam, and the *Majestic*, "Hmph", and that was all ; but all the bits and pieces of the *Dimbula* now spoke in unison together, and were a ship, and if you can go and describe it all in the same way, human, matured and understanding, why, read *If* for your guerdon.

In the same book also comes *The Devil and the Deep Sea*, told of a British tramp that does illegal freight-running and missions of many kinds, changing her name for each occasion, and gets into trouble with the dagos far away in the Far East. It is highly technical, too, very intriguing, and perhaps a little indigestible, but it shows the gift of technical interpretation to perfection. It is *Judson and the Empire* without the fun.

## CHAPTER IX

### KIPLING AND TRUE LOVE

The Fair Flowers—The Course of True Love—Courtship and All That—  
A Late-Victorian Idyll—The Brushwood Boy's Miriam—*William the Conqueror*

#### *The Fair Flowers*

As there is one glory of the moon and another of the stars, so is there the glory of lovers lawful, and stolen excitement of lovers unlawful. In this chapter it's the glory of the first that must be sung—lilies for the bridal bed, bedad ! sweet maid, all nature's sweet, good things, and everything in true and honest romance. For the first rush of praise and enthusiasm which greeted Kipling's earlier stories, it is not too much to say that the sympathy and insight displayed in his stories of love and courtship were to a great extent responsible. It is all so natural, so clean, and as we hoped to know it ourselves. As his genius developed and his radius increased, so does his insight into subtler things, as from *Pink Dominoes* and *The Lover's Litany* to *The Wish House* and *A Madonna of the Trenches*.

If we take all that he has written for us in character and anecdote of woman grave and gay—the madness of her madness and the gladness of her gladness—we shall find ourselves putting the stories into two separate baskets. There will be the *Trinitaka*, that deals with joy and mirth, and the mill of paradise as heaven meant our world to be, and the other in which we find a world that has queered its own pitch, that pitch which can be so much worse by the very nature of things for women than for men. Let us first of all enjoy the *Iqd-i-Gul*, the "Garland of Roses", and leave the headache and heart-ache to the morning.

#### *The Course of True Love*

Before the present years were sought out, before the years of latch-keys, suffrages, motors and independences, the old story and the old laws put their eternal grip on the world. All day and every day does one see the strong, independent, self-sufficient young woman go down in the old worship and abasement before what simpler folk would call "my man". "Be the day short, or be the day long, at length it ringeth to evensong";



and when women and men find the twin soul, the instinct to humble the feminine self before it reappears, and, of course, *vice versa*. All the world likes to believe that the humbling is but a sign of happiness, a belief in each other which shall endure for ever and ever amen ! The world happily looks agog on the course of true love, and we may ponder in sympathy and understanding on what Kipling presents to us on this delectable subject. The world says : "I am old and I have been young—and I love the ways of a man with a maid," and again, of course, *vice versa*.

True love, the straightforward courting of clean and happy young people, is a very prominent subject in Kipling's earlier stories and verse. They are, among all his work, most beloved of the people. We have it in many forms ; the humorous Simla tale in verse, *Pink Dominoes*, comes at once to the mind :

Jenny would go in a domino—  
Pretty and pink but warm ;  
While I attended, clad in a splendid  
Austrian uniform.

—which tells how a lady of high degree kissed the wrong man and what came of it to him and his Jenny—engaged "on the eve of the fancy ball".

The pleasing idyll of Minnie Bofkins is good, simple fun that makes it possible for Cleary to marry his "little Carrie"—very simple, life-like stuff.

Modern theological writers have so removed the fear of hell-fire that the human is now without fear, *bedār*, as was said of the Bengal Army before it mutinied.

Happily the original right in our natures is even stronger than the original wrong. The *camarade* instinct of women for their men, the cherishing of women by their men, is still a primary instinct, and long may it so remain. Therefore let us make merry and rejoice when all is well with lovers, and when Kipling shows us in happy simplicity the instinct which in another and more complicated form is shown forcibly in *The Wish House* and *A Madonna of the Trenches*.

*The Lover's Litany* is a ballad of flirtation, pokes fun at the inconstant male, the broken cowries of many markets, and the fading fancy of young folks' affections. But the haunting lilt gets home somehow, as it applies to each succeeding flirtation and liaison, *Love Like Ours Can Never Die*, whether it be eyes of grey on the sodden ground or eyes of blue in the Simla Hills ; yet does the image of love without its reality and a quarter of its danger, as Mr. Jorrocks might say, appear, and perhaps no hearts are broken to the refrain of *The Lover's Litany*.

In *The Fall of Jock Gillespie* there is that charming description of the lad in love who came back to the club with his heart on his sleeve and a twig in his mouth :

There's a thrid o' hair on your dress-coat breast,  
Aboon the heart a wee.

*The Brushwood Boy* is probably the most charming, distinctive and original story of courtship that the world has yet read.

### *Courtship and All That*

The humours and subtleties of courtship would not be likely to escape kindly notice, and the *Maxims of Hafiz* could not overlook so tempting a subject for homily. All the world over do we know to our cost that

Pleasant the snaffle of Courtship, improving the manners and carriage ;  
But the colt who is wise will abstain from the terrible thorn-bit of  
Marriage.

And to point the moral further, let it be said that the Eastern "thorn-bit" has steel spikes round the mouthpiece and along the bridle-bar as well, so that, at the rider's will, the thorns may be pressed home on gums and tongue. Not a nice simile for married ladies—it produces that "*piaffing*", the old term of the *haute école* that the Army used to use for the young man prancing before his lady-love at her behest. There is another man who said—but he seems to have deserved it :

There's many a man who wished himself dead  
For the sake of two eyes and a pretty girl's head  
And the tongue of the woman that owned him.

There is one of these old English sayings that are good to treasure, and well worth remembering when someone is being bitter : "Give the losers least to prate."

In the *Maxims of Hafiz* the same is applied to the ways of a man with a maid :

In public her face is averted, with anger she nameth thy name,  
It is well. Was there ever a loser content with the loss of the game ?

Before the days of the cinema young women were short of instruction, and how to "pluck up kisses by the roots" had not been learnt. So it is written that when a maiden, amid scufflings, bids him give o'er—and yet at the end before it is too late "lip meets with lip"—why, then, "Get out ! She has been there before." Oh, wise Mr. Hafiz. It is also Mr. Hafiz who, speaking of the lady who pleads that she is misunderstood, says :

In vain in the sight of the Bird, is the net of the fowler displayed.

Among the pretty ballads of love and courtship there is none brighter in its lilt and happier in its ending than *As the Bell Clinks*, the rhyme of the lad going up into the Hills of India to test his luck with his lady fair, as every man should. To those who know the story the personal life of Kipling stands out herein. It talks of days now past these thirty years, when you drove to Murree, to Simla, or the other holiday resorts in the Himalayas which British energy and money had laid out, in a *tonga*. A *tonga* is, or rather was, a pair-horse curricule driven with a pole and cross-bar fastened on a pad-saddle on each pony's back. Ponies were changed every four or five miles, and each new pair kicked, reared, lay down—poor galled and gallant hearts—and then started forth at full gallop. Their galls and ferocity were only paralleled by the zest with which they munched the ample green fodder provided in their short hours of rest. They were driven by a man, usually an elderly Mohammedan, whose greyed beard was dyed red to match the hair of the Prophet's wife—on whom be peace. A battered ex-Army bugle would hang over his shoulder, on which at every corner he would wind such a note as that with which Don Quixote would hail an empty fortress to surrender. In front of him the *tonga* coupling-bar, behind the traveller, often as a pea on a drum. . . .

And I wondered idly, blindly, if the maid would greet me kindly,  
That was all—the rest was settled by the clinking *tonga*-bar.

To all his reveries and meditation the *tonga*-bar raps out the answer thus :

When she whispered, something sadly : "I—we—feel your going badly !"  
"And you let the chance escape you ?" rapped the rattling *tonga*-bar.  
"What a chance and what an idiot !" clicked the vicious *tonga*-bar.

And at last as the ponies gallop the last stage :

"Try your luck—you can't do better !" twanged the loosened *tonga*-bar.

There is a charming true-love ballad in *An Old Song*, which was one of his earlier ones (*Departmental Ditties*). It is a song of Simla written like the equally appealing *As the Bell Clinks* in the days when Simla was reached by road instead of rail, which, it may be remarked, has been somewhat restored by the car. This is how it lilts :

So long as neath the Kalka hills  
The *tonga* horn shall ring,  
So long as down the Solon dip  
The hard-held ponies swing.

The lilt of this brings back every time the glamour of leaving the gasping plains and the dust, and breathing cooler air, with the scented smell of pine and deodar, as each milestone slipped behind, bringing with it, perhaps, the thought of a whole week of escape, and some delightful dance- and riding-partner a-waiting you.

At the end of each verse the refrain slightly changes :

If you love me as I love you,  
What pair so happy as we two ?

*So long as Aces take the King, or So long as Rumours from the North,*  
and so on till the refrain reaches the climax of its supposing :

If you love me as I love you  
All earth is servant to us two !

There is a charming courtship story for us in *My Son's Wife*,<sup>1</sup> set in a quaint setting of souls and modern Chelsea intellectuals and decadents, with the hunting-world intervening, which tells of the winning back of a lost soul to his place among the Old English. It is set after the manner of the conjurer's gambits aforesaid in a quaint setting which serves to sing the old song. There is Farmer Sidney of a family that "don't marry but keep", and jolly, sound, sensible Connie Sperrit, who makes Midmore into a country gentleman and a hunting-man to boot, typical of one sort of English womanhood—we all know her, happily—and Rhoda the faithful serving-woman, once "keep" to Farmer Sidney—as human a story as ever was.

And if you want a glimpse of sturdy Lancashire character under a cloud for a while, you will find it in *In the Same Boat*, where the clever physician brings together the two victims of a drug habit to react on, stimulate and encourage each other. It is a tragedy for those who read the story that they who, hand in hand, fight with the beasts at Ephesus should not hitch their lives together. It is not so, and you must watch sheer camaraderie take them hand in hand as Miss Henschil and Conroy fight the brave fight together, twice in the night mail ; but when there comes the great discovery that in both cases their peculiar nightmares are not drugs, but their mother's pre-natal frights, then the beasts are beaten for ever. Miss Henschil has a man of her own for whom the fight has been fought ; Conroy has fought his alone, and, for all his admiration of his companion, has no complications. But since there is always a touch of pathos in Kipling's noticing stories of men and women, it is Nursey Blaber who is in charge of

<sup>1</sup> *A Diversity of Creatures.*

Miss Henschil, who must needs look on the unheeding Conroy with the soft eyes and heart.

### *A Late-Victorian Idyll*

Even as I prayed, his steadfast look the king  
Bent on me, and the radiance of his eyes  
Shone like a sword of flame; I am content.

Almost before the fair flowers were seen or the movable powers established, it has pleased the growing world to cast a friendly eye on lovers.

I have already dealt with such charming love vanities of Kipling's as *The Lover's Litany*, but now let us turn to that panel of courtship among the heavy dragoons and maidens of half a century ago as worthy of our study, in that short-long story—the latest of literary fashions, by the way—that came out of Simla and the old cavalry station of Umballa. In case the courting couples of today think that they are the first, even if proposals take the form of passing a wedding-cake shop and saying, "What about it, old bean?" we will explore *The Story of the Gadsbys*. To get us into the right mood, however, looking among the jewel-box on the same pale-green paper, I must show you Eden Phillpotts touching the theme with magic wand. True, his parable was the story of the love of an immortal faun for the beauty of a girl that faded, thereby perhaps meaning the wicked ways of the man who is often young and venturesome when his first love is, as I once heard an Admiral say of an old flame, "now fifty round the bunt".

There went a faun in Arcady—  
Sing hey, sing ho, sing Arcady,  
Who met a maiden glad and gay,  
And beautiful and fair.  
His rustic heart beat fierce with love—  
Sing hey, sing ho, a wild wood love.  
He set her all the nymphs above,  
That maid so debonair.

With that lilt in our ears it's with Kingsley once more,

Hey for horse and hound, lad!

and learn how Kipling sees it.

*The Story of the Gadsbys* is entirely in dialogue, and is almost a play, and is something of a triumph in sustained dialogue; indeed, this and *Gow's Watch* show that the playwright gift was somewhere in a corner of Pandora's gift-box to Kipling.

Remember, again, that it is set fifty years ago, when half of your mothers weren't even born and hardly thought of, and we open with two girls a-chattering over confidences,

while Miss Threegan's mother in the next room is getting into her habit to ride with her handsome cavalier Captain Gadsby the dragoon, a good soldier who only in the first page or two appears as a *flaneur* and empty-head. If you had ever served Mike Rimington you would like, some day, even this first mis-painting to beslightly retouched. There is a dash of miaou miaou about Minnie Threegan, which her mother's patronizing ways have, perhaps, called forth. In defiance of a growing figure, Mother has been, with difficulty, got into the tailor-made habit by her daughter, who is chatting to the waiting dragoon. Minnie is a little unkind to her mother's weight, even hints at "poor dear Mamma's rheumatism". She understands horses and captivates the big dragoon.

We have a little by-play which at the moment is unintelligible to the girls of today, but which the cycle of fashion will soon bring round for them, that dictum of one engaged young lady that "kissing a man without a moustache was like eating an egg without salt". The snuggle-pups of today—if one may use an American expressive-ism from my scrap-book—can't, or won't, grow them. They need not worry. Waterloo and Trafalgar were won without whiskers, or moustachios. But it was Dundreary himself, with his hair parted behind and brushed to the ears, that followed the magnificent bewhiskered Cardigan into the Mouth of Hell in the Balaclava valley, and built the Thames Embankment.

The moustachioed Gadsby is much struck with the charm of the young lady, especially when, with delicate hands, she fits curb-chain and bit properly on her mother's horse, and as mother and he take that ride round Jakkho that is almost a ritual, he does notice that mother is not so young as she thinks. The dragoon soon becomes ecstatic, and marries the lass—"little featherweight"—to the amusement, consternation and sympathy of his brother officers and friends. It is in the sketches of early married life, and the touches which still must hold good in nature, that this story excels. Courtships of that kind are short; it was a very genuine love-match and love-storm. This huge dragoon, who was not unread in the arts, was a master-of-horse of high merit, and had come through storm scenes in the Afghan War with more than credit. Minnie's mother must perforce make the best of it, though not, perhaps, so gracefully as Venus Anno Domini in another story. The ballad already quoted by Eden Phillpotts follows the same train of thought. The girl

Whose little breasts were round and low,  
Sing ho, sing hey, so round and low,

had grown old ; the puzzled faun had watched her lamp of beauty dim, and then turned to another :

But sure he felt no pang of grief—  
Sing ho, sing hey, no pang of grief,  
To see Time play the cruel thief.  
He loved her daughter now.

The talk over the engagement in clubs and places where they gossip, as the rubric has it, turned to Gadsby's flirtation, not with Minnie's mother, which was just an ordinary merry-making and horse-riding, but to a very serious affair, of a year or so before, so serious that, as R. L. Stevenson once remarked, it was "recognized by the police". This affair with a certain Mrs. Herriott was very marked indeed, and while the club agreed that there was no law preventing a man tiring of a woman, forcible law did enact that you must not do it till the woman was tired of you. But there is a time when feather-weights drive into dragoons' lives, and when the change may have to be sudden. We are shown Gadsby at Naini Tal, another Himalayan resort, where he had gone to have a futile explanation and farewell with the unfortunate Mrs. Herriott, who is more than worthy of our sympathy, even if she had made her own hell, with Gadsby assisting, and the scene is marvellously drawn by the wizard.

Mrs. Herriott, dining with Gadsby at the club, soon sees that there is an intervener. It is a pitiful scene amid the flowers and the champagne-glasses, and there is no way out. The coward does it by post—Gadsby did it in person. This chapter of explanations is, perhaps, the best unveiling of a woman's heart, given the circumstances that Kipling has created. As old as the hills, as new as the may. When the sentence is pronounced, and Mrs. Herriott has realized that she is not going down before another pirate, but to the smallest and most innocent of *les petits bateaux*, then in true style the Old Guard presents arms. *La garde meurt et ne se rend pas.*

Here is the final scene—nay, not scene, rather Mass :

SHE : So it's all ended through no fault of mine. . . . Haven't I behaved beautifully ? I've accepted your dismissal, and you managed it as cruelly as you could. [But could any man do it aright ?] . . . I can't give you up. . . . When it is all over, come back to me, and you'll find that you're my Pip still !

CAPTAIN G. : 'False move, and you pay for it. It's a girl !

MRS. H. (*rising*) : A girl ! I was a girl not very long ago. Be good to her, Pip. I dare say she believes in you.

(*Flourish of trumpets by the Old Guard.*)

So Gadsby had a good deal to go through—far worse than the Afghans in the Chardeh Valley—before the marriage-bells

and the amusing scene—which is brightly told, also in dialogue—of getting Gadsby, twittering with nervousness, into his full dress, and so to the altar, where he pulls himself together and looks well. Many of us have been through it, and know that the tale is true, though I did manage to put the wind up my own mother-in-law by saying the ring had been forgotten.

So through the valley of the great woman's festival Gadsby rides to his Eden; and a very charming story it all is, set in the deodar forests in the great Himalayan hills beyond Simla.

Sitting on the great trunks of the fallen giants, searching for wood-strawberries, watching the avalanches, it is not every couple that can honeymoon so happily. The chatter between them is pretty enough; the demand to know details of an earlier engagement, and to demand that he shall never, never marry again—so easy to promise—are the common symptoms of the occasion. The real charm comes later, when they are duly installed in their bungalow in the cavalry cantonment. There is a rather typical officer scene, Gadsby leaning over a fully packed cavalry saddle, with a pipe in his mouth, trying, like many another before and since, to get all that a mounted man and horse can want on to a saddle, in marching-order, without breaking the horse's back. His bride wanders in, not really very welcome, but anxious to be of help in his life and career, and Gadsby, at heart anxious to be left to his job, must happily toy with her. She sees the scar made by an Afghan knife on his forearm for the first time, a pleasant excuse for dalliance, mingled with indignation, horror and anger against the man who dared hurt "my husband".

But there is something on her mind, and she lingers shy and afraid. Then turning over his papers there is a letter, a letter from the Herriott woman, foolishly kept! O foolish dragoon! It was a frank letter, and the lady mentions what were then, in those dead days beyond recall, "the almost inevitable consequences of marriage". Minnie flushes at the impertinence, is angry with the freedom of the letter, while Gadsby blunderingly tries to explain the unexplainable. But Minnie reads on and is exasperating, reading out the semi-cryptic sentences. At last Pip, in something of his parade voice, of which the rasp had frightened her a few minutes before, begs her to stop it.

That is the end of it; Minnie subsides into tears. "Oh, be good to me! Be good to me! There is only you . . . anywhere."

Gadsby is terribly concerned . . . and tries to console the inconsolable, but the sun shines a little after a while.

Minnie had come earlier ostensibly to tell him about her



jam-making. But now she whispers that it was not about the jam-making that she had interrupted him.

"Bother the jam and the equipment!" There is a suitable interlude . . . then Mrs. Gadsby speaks:

My finger wasn't scalded at *all*. I . . . I wanted to speak to you about . . . about . . . something else, and . . . I didn't know how.

CAPTAIN G.: Speak away, then. Eh! Wha . . . at? Minnie! Here, don't go away! You don't mean . . . ?

MRS. G. (*hysterically backing to portière and hiding her face in its folds*): The almost inevitable consequences!

Flits through the portière and bolts herself in her own room. A pretty scene, and in its time a very delicately drawn one.

Now that the consequences are not inevitable, and the cradle is so long left empty in many cases, now that the modern novelist is succeeding in destroying much of the natural delicacy and reticence of women, perhaps "*comment elles s'annoncent*" is done differently.

But in the days of reticence the telling of the great news of the kindling life was a matter of more graceful diction than, "Bob, I'm in for an infant." The stirring of the "daie-springs" deserves all the delicacy and respect that mortal men and women can give it.

There is a tragic chapter yet to come of that anxious, pitiful shadow which so many feeling men have had to undergo. Minnie has been undergoing her sentence of solitary confinement and has been tried for her life at the end. The trial is now in full progress, and the sentence seems like to be death. The child has been born dead and poor Minnie is in the throes of puerperal fever. The chaplain is in attendance—a bad sign; there have been many hours of pitiful anxiety and Gadsby is in the last stage of twitter. The chaplain has given him a stiff brandy, and the doctor has come out from the sick-room and said he might go in—nothing mattered.

The conversation between the wandering girl and her stricken Pip is heartrending, charming in its tone and texture, but tearing at heart-strings. Happily the *ayah* has an inspiration. She stops the *punkah*. The event has kept Minnie in the plains, and the heat is terrific. The sudden cessation of the wind-stream brings forth the long-looked-for perspiration. The crisis is over and Minnie is to live, and Gadsby is spared the husband's nightmare. And Kipling writes this long before he could have faced the same vigil!

In the East the dread of a wife so dying is terrible. The dead wife will haunt the man who is responsible, and indeed all

men. The ghost of a woman dead in childbirth is known as *churel*, and it is to be recognized by the poor little feet being turned backwards. Indeed, young men are advised never to speak to a strange woman they may meet by the way until they are quite sure which way her feet are turned. At Simla hard by the mall is a *churel baoli* (a "*churel's* well"), and none would pass the spot by night save in groups and clumps. Now, however, a beneficent municipality has set up an arc-lamp by the very spot, and all may pass in the full glare of a light brighter than day.

But the clouds lift from the happy pair, and in due course a son, a well-born son, appears on the scene with no complications, and the cups of the dragoon and Minnie his wife are full to overflowing. But we have as an ending a typical scene. Gadsby, to the horror of his friend and late best man, talks of "sending in his papers" and leaving the Army. In vain his friend remonstrates. Will he desert his comrades and the great and ancient ship of the regiment? Gadsby tells how he fears to leave his wife alone in the world, how every time he leads his squadron, even when three horses' lengths ahead, he sees himself down, with all the horses galloping over him, and leading a squadron at a charge on rough ground is a very different matter from a level parade-ground. Mafflin is horror-struck as Gadsby tells him his dread, and there is, too, the memory of Minnie in the valley of the shadow.

Mafflin fails to understand that this can be the man who led at Andheran, and came out of the show dripping like a butcher. They come very near a quarrel, for Mafflin could not understand any woman getting between him and the regiment. Then Gadsby says :

"I am an ungrateful ruffian to say this, but marriage, even as good a marriage as mine has been . . . hampers a man's work, it cripples his sword arm . . . oh, it plays hell with his notions of duty ! Sometimes . . . good and sweet as she is . . . sometimes I could wish that I had kept my freedom . . . no, I don't mean that exactly.' "

How many of us in His Majesty's Forces have felt the same, and how much more so those married men of the Armies of the Great War whose profession it was not and who died where they stood ! Oh, well has it been said that "He travels the fastest who travels alone".

And that, as Kipling puts it, is the story of the Gadsbys. If we look back on this apparently simple tale we shall remember the dismissal of the Herriott woman, the idyll in the forest,

the watch by the bedside and the dread of the married soldier, as four bits of first-class sympathetic insight and presentation, despite the denunciation you will find in Francis Adams' critique.

*The Brushwood Boy's Miriam*

I see sky and earth  
Kiss in bliss and mirth.

(Anon)

In the terms of holy writ, there are two stories that delight me and the third maketh my heart sad, and the first and the second are stories of true love. We read all about the makers of tragedy, we watch the kisses aforesaid being plucked up by the roots at the cinema, and perhaps wish that it might come our way; but really the human race—or, at any rate, the Anglo-Saxon portion—is all for the old Dutch and the pink flannelette.

There are two Kipling stories that delight all human nature in Anglo-Saxondom above all others, and they represent the very essence of the best in cultured womanhood. The types may even be the same, but they are depicted in different circumstances. They are *The Brushwood Boy* and *William the Conqueror*. The third that maketh my heart sad is *They*, that mysterious story of deep Sussex woods and old houses, and "dens" and "eyes", and the glamour of old England. So once again with Jesus-ben-Sirach, "There are three things that grieve me and the fourth maketh my heart sad, and the first is a man of war that is in poverty."

However, that is taking us too far from Saxon Sussex, *They*, and the oak glens, and the trimmed and trained yew peacocks—*They*, which behind its beauty and its sadness and the bits that puzzle us has as its true under-meaning the yearn of the unfulfilled womb of the "blindie".

Let us for manners and instruction—as the Apocrypha is read in the churches—first look at *The Brushwood Boy* and examine its texture. Here, as in the two long books *The Light That Failed* and the *Naulahka*, we have the story commencing with childhood and its memories taking form through life, in both minds. What those memories were don't matter; they were in themselves trivial enough, but it will be remembered how a lad from the typical small country-gentleman's family—that thrice invaluable class that socialist taxation has aimed at killing—goes a-soldiering as his forebears have done, and is a very good, a conspicuously good, young regimental officer in India. He finally distinguishes himself in a Frontier war and comes home on leave—that wonderful first leave that is worth

the spending of many years in the worst climate to experience and enjoy.

When I came home after a too long absence of ten years, my mother had put a new box of soldiers on my dressing-table, though I had brought a wife and a D.S.O., and claimed to be a man. However, let us remember that, before he came home, the long nights in a very hot cantonment had produced a dream which often repeated itself, an absurd dream, but it had the merit of being continuous and coming back again and again in the same form.

We all remember it—Policeman Day and the thirty-mile ride, the Lily Lock and the duck that said "quack", and because it was in the sleepless Indian hot-season nights, Policeman Day and a broken sleep were a special horror. Always he met Annie-and-Louise, this girl acquaintance of his childhood, some wonderful and glorious being that was somehow her, who rode night after night with him on the thirty-mile ride. As the first days of his home-coming pass, his mother announces that a very pet girl of hers is coming to stay, and Cottar is somewhat bored. The day of her arrival he does not get back from fishing, in which the lay of the fish lured him far from home, till long past dinner, and decides not to go down; a little grumpy perhaps. Then a glorious contralto voice in the drawing-room sings . . . the visitor, his mother's girl.

He is stunned and astounded to hear her sing a song about Policeman Day, a song, it transpires later, of her own writing, and the City of Sleep and all the horror side of that recurring dream.

His mother comes up to see that all is well with him, concerned at his being so late, but he mutters her away, to pass a crazy night, and all the while there surges in his brain the thought that here was the Lily Lock girl, the Thirty-mile Ride girl. Astounding!

It is a shy and awkward officer that comes down a little late to breakfast to find at the table the face that he has known for long. He is awkward and distraught to his mother and guest, and Miriam the Lily Lock girl is not impressed. But she agrees to ride with him that afternoon. The ride begins badly, for Miriam is a little scornful of this rather awkward, silent oaf. Things get better when they gallop and the coursing of the air thaws Miriam's stiffness.

"'Oh,' she cries, 'Dandy and I are old friends, but I don't think we have ever gone better together.'"

"No ; but you've gone quicker, once or twice."

"The girl gasped. 'Really? When?'"

"Georgie moistened his lips. 'Don't you remember the Thirty-Mile-Ride—with me—when "They" were after us, on the beach road, with the sea to the left . . . going toward the Lamp-Post on the Downs?' "

Well might Miriam gasp, and then, you will remember, they put it all together, piece by piece, thrilled beyond realization.

What a glorious story, and what exchange of confidences and memories ! Has it ever been done before by any writer, however sympathetic and imaginative ? Oh, how we must hope that the gilt never came off the gingerbread, nor the glamour off their love, for ever and ever. There is hardly an Englishman, certainly not a man of character and action, for whom Miriam is not everything he ever dreamed of, Argive Helen herself on her pylon at Tanaïs ! Georgie Cottar is, perhaps, no more remarkable than many another—choice young men and goodly—but I, speaking and writing as a mere man, hope that women want to be as Miriam, full of grit and free of guile, the best type of girl of our race. Oh, thank you, Mr. Kipling, for all we have and hold !

### *William the Conqueror*

It is, perhaps, remarkable that two such understanding and inspiring stories of English girls should be born within such reach of each other to appear in the same collection, *The Day's Work*. At the very end is *The Brushwood Boy*, and early in the volume we get the *hors-d'œuvre* of *William the Conqueror*, an entirely different girl, yet own sister to Miriam. We are more in India here than with the India-returned Cottar preliminaries.

"William" is the sister of a police-officer in the Punjab, a good average but never-set-the-Thames-on-fire young man. "William"—in other words Miss Martyn—had come out to her brother four years ago to live with him and share his exiguous police pay. It has been a hard, thoroughly enjoyable chummery life on very short commons. No hills for her on the family income, and friends had shook their heads over pale faces, Baghdad boils, and the other ills of those who brave the heat too much. Nevertheless, Bill, to give her still shorter name, had endured it happily summer after summer, as her mother and certainly her grandmother would most assuredly have done. This going to the hills is a very modern luxury, almost in the same street with motor-cars and cocktails, and gramophones

and all the things that a poorer, harder generation had to do without, and had to go without to some effect, bringing up families of twice and thrice the modern size at the same time and not thinking too much of it.

In case you should think that I talk through my hat, let me invite your attention to the autobiography of General Sir Luther Vaughan, who served most of his life in India on the Frontier. Just before the Indian Mutiny his wife and family are making for England, and, according to the ways of the time, there being no railways in the country, he puts them on a log-raft at Attock, where the great Frontier railway hold crosses the Indus on its way to the Afghan frontier. On the raft a hut with two or three compartments is built of grass matting and poles. In six weeks they would arrive near Karachi, where the logs of the raft would be sold, having lived on tinned stores and such fowls as they could purchase along the banks en route. At Karachi they would some time or other take ship. Captain Vaughan did not seem to think it unusual, and does not mention it as a hardship or anything uncommon. A few days later he mentions equally unconcernedly that his wife's raft had been wrecked, but that fortunately another lady's raft was coming down-stream behind, and took them on to Karachi with her.

No doubt William would have done the same, but the ordinary ladies of India who find travel by first-class rail so dusty and fatiguing might take note and wonder if they are as good stuff as their grandmothers. Probably they are at heart.

This is but by the way, to show that after all William's life was not too hard, and in the Punjab, where her brother served, there was the glorious winter to look forward to and to recover in. Now the story rolls on quietly enough for a while, and you see William among her brother's friends and with more knowledge of the vernaculars, and with more understanding of the peoples than our ladies usually care to evince or acquire. Then comes the call. There is a famine in the south, not quite the horror of the older days, when there were no railways to rush food and cattle-fodder into the starving province, but still so serious that some of the best and most energetic men from all provinces were being rushed to double- and treble-man the scene of action; to organize works and food supplies for stampeding starving villagers, to conduct long bullock convoys of food to concentrations far from the rail, to manage the thousands of abandoned children that you may pick up by the wayside, be given at the train windows, or buy by the dozen for sixpence.

Never a Gandhi, or a Congress *wallah*, has helped save starving district, or cared a d—n about such things, or has the faintest idea how they are done. Happily the irrigation of the British on their canals and their railways, for which the everyday British investor has lent the money, and the great war reserves of hay that the Army keeps and produces in famine time, have made even the partial famines of William almost a thing of the past. The famine procedure is well known in the Services, and there is a famine code allowing all sorts of generous short-cuts, and, if needs be, short shifts, that the Governor-General may put into operation.

In the Punjab hot season of the story they are speculating who will be requisitioned. Scott, the irrigation engineer, will be sure to go. He it is for whom William is the one thing worth living for, while William, with her short-cropped curly hair, her rough riding-kit, and her general ways of *bon camarade*, hardly thinks of such things. Martyn is ordered down, and then Scott. Jimmy Hawkins, the famous *band-o'-bust-wallah*,<sup>1</sup> is in charge. To Martyn's horror, William has wired to Lady Jimmy to ask if she may come too, and, while Martyn is talking, has shut up the bungalow and arranged everything.

Then we have a lively story of a famine, and how the British deal with such things, and of Lady Jimmy, the splendid wife of a famous husband. To Lady Jim alone in a camp that is devastatingly hot, the arrival of William, the only woman in camp beside herself, is a ray of light and hope. But there is nothing subtle in the story, save that Kipling always brings out the inner, subtler side that exists for those who can see in all things—William with hosts of famine children, Scott working himself to the bone, Jimmy Hawkins approving, stirring, keeping the Governments content; and then it ends up as such things should and must end, in the happiness of William and Scott—a real, simple, happy story of work, of difficulties overcome and of true love, love running smooth. But it were well if all the girls of England were worthy to be in the same box with this glorious and delightful William, who was undoubtedly the conqueror of difficulties and hearts. In fact, in the language and style of today William was the very best sort of *bint*, and here I may remark that *bint* is a word of honour, being no less than the Arabic for daughter, feminine of *Ibn*; plural *binat* (*cf. Jisr mal Binat ul Yakub*, the "Bridges of the Daughters of Jacob" over Jordan beyond Nazareth and Galilee).

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<sup>1</sup> Organizer.

## CHAPTER X

### KIPLING AND INDIA

*India—Without Benefit of Clergy—The City of Dreadful Night—In Black and White—The Tomb of His Ancestors—Interpretation.*

#### *India*

SINCE Kipling rose to fame and reputation on his Indian gambit, it is but natural that we should dwell more fully, and with the greater searchlight, on all that he has told us of India. After all, it is of the great epic of the English in India—or, perhaps even more truly in India than elsewhere, of the British of the United Kingdom—that Kipling sang. He saw the ruins of the great Turkish Empire, envisaged how the traders, nonplussed at first at the fall of peace and order, and of the trade for which they had come, slowly took up the role of rulers and pacifiers and organizers, a few of them realizing the great destiny that none but they could fill. It was not to be wondered at that he paused to study the English in the East at war and at play and in that amazing struggle of the fight with famine, with cholera, with tyranny, and with poverty which the best products of our public schools for more than a century have carried out.

In this matter it is well to remember that India took the very pick of the competing youth. Kipling realized the self-sacrifice in times of danger that the Service demanded. The engineering feats took his fancy, and the hot, fierce life of the Frontier soldier captured his imagination. So of these he sang and wrote as the theme first to his prentice but gifted hand.

Kipling has been criticized for not making a more sustained effort to interpret Indians themselves to other lands. But such criticism or comment is quite unnecessary. He did not do so to a very great extent because it did not suit him to do so. A man may sing of what he likes. In these early days he was but painting pictures that he saw, partly to exercise his gift and use it to gain the necessary pence of life. He was then conscious of no mission or power to describe and interpret, and only knew that he had a gift worth using. Also it is to be remembered that, apart from his early childhood, his sojourn in India was but short.

He went back there from school early in the 'eighties,



and came home at the end of 1889. His experience and knowledge of India, other than what he absorbed from reading, came from sympathetic observation in out-of-the-way places, and with that savant-like gift referred to, he inferred and depicted from the comparatively little that he did actually know. His Indian short stories that deal with the Indian alone are not inconsiderable in the aggregate, and all treat of some pathetic incident or story in that land of pathos. They are nearly all charming, some sob-engendering, a few macabre, and most include some gems of description and phrasing. They are usually stories of very simple folk, and one or two of Indian women in sad yet ideal love relationships with some Briton. Francis Adams, who wrote such searching criticisms in the early 'nineties, talks of "Anglo-Indian bachelors of all sorts inspiring dark-eyed little native girls with dog-like affection", which is a very sorry description of what are idylls of passion and pathos and devotion.

The humble, faithful Indians, often of outcast tribes, who clung to the British so faithfully, the yeoman peasantry who served as soldiery, the baron with hawk on wrist, the peasant fighting for a livelihood with arid soil and drought, the life-giving British canals made with British capital, and their makers, all appealed to his sympathy and admiration.

Kipling left India in the early 'nineties of the last century, only to return for one short visit; but of the few years of his sojourn he made great use, in learning of the inner life of the humble, and of the underworld. It was during the early years of his writing that most of his Indian stories, other than those of the soldiery, were written. In a country of close on 350,000,000 folk confined by religions, curbed by inhibitions, steadied or unsteadied by vastly different racial characteristics, the chalk-on-granite of urban Westernization has little effect. The people of today are in bulk the people of whom Kipling wrote, and their ways and their ideas do not change; neither can their conditions of life, save so far as the improvements in agriculture—incidentally, the chief aim of all Indian administrations, long before Lord Linlithgow succeeded to the vice-regal throne—slowly raise the economic condition.

In *In Black and White* and *Life's Handicap* there are stories of such Indians as he elects to depict. The stories that deal—and marvellously deal—with the women, are treated of in a separate chapter, so worthy are they in colour, sympathy, and understanding of something more than passing allusion. In *Plain Tales from the Hills* there are three or four. The story of *The Gate of the Hundred Sorrows*, that very complete study of an

opium-haunt in Lahore—run, of course, by a Chinaman—is told by a half-caste habitué. One can almost get there blindfold, if we know what a northern bazaar is like, for

“it lies between the Coppersmith’s Gully” (very like unto the residence of Alexander the coppersmith of holy writ) “and the pipe-stem sellers’ quarter, within a hundred yards too, as the crow flies, of the Mosque of Wazir Khan . . . you might even go through the very gully it stands in . . . and be none the wiser. We used to call the gully ‘The Gully of Black Smoke’, but its native name is altogether different of course. A loaded donkey couldn’t pass between the walls, and, at one point, just before you reach the Gate, a bulged house-front makes people go along sideways.

“It was here that Fung-Tching kept the den ; “opposite the Joss was Fung-Tching’s coffin. He had spent a good deal of his savings on that, and whenever a new man came to the Gate he was always introduced to it. . . . Besides the mats, there was no other furniture . . . only the coffin, and the old Joss all green and purple with age and polish. . . . Nothing grows on you so much, if you are white, as ‘The Black Smoke’.”

It is one of Kipling’s stories that belong to the macabre. *The Bisara of Pooree*, one of those earlier intimate efforts that Kipling rarely produced in later days, deals deeply, if somewhat humorously, with one of those mysterious relic-charms which those who know sometimes come across. It works untold evil in the wrong hands. If you want to know more of such things, why, ask Imre Schweiger, in the mall of Delhi about, say, Roos-Keppel’s Bactrian ring, and the woman of high degree who comes daily in a carriage with two white horses to have it impressed on her forehead. Perhaps he will tell you I am talking nonsense, but then he will not tell it to everyone. Of such, only for evil rather than good, was the Bisara of Pooree, and this is how Kipling describes it :

“It was made at Pooree ages since . . . the manner of its making would fill a small book . . . and was stolen by one of the Temple dancing girls there, for her own purposes, and then passed on from hand to hand steadily northward, till it reached Hanlé : always bearing the same name—the Bisara of Pooree. In shape it is a tiny square box of silver, studded outside with eight small balas-rubies. Inside the box, which opens with a spring, is a little eyeless fish, carved from some sort of dark, shiny nut and wrapped in a shred of faded gold-cloth. That is the Bisara of Pooree, and it

were better for a man to take a king-cobra in his hand than to touch the Bisara of Pooree.

"Any man who knows about the Bisara of Pooree will tell you what its powers are . . . always supposing that it has been honestly stolen. It is the only regularly working, trustworthy love-charm in the country, with one exception. (The other charm is in the hands of a trooper of the Nizam's Horse, at a place called Tuprani, due north of Hyderabad.) If the Bisara be not stolen, but given or bought or found, it turns against its owner in three years and leads to ruin or death. . . . At present the Bisara is safe on a hack-pony's neck, inside the blue bead-necklace that keeps off the Evil Eye. If the pony-driver ever finds it, and wears it, or gives it to his wife, I am sorry for him."

Which is a very intriguing commencement to what happened to a *sahib* who bought it from his servant who got it from a hill-woman with a goitre at Theog! The rest of the story is about *sahib-log* and does not belong to this chapter, until we are told how the "man who knew it tied it round the neck of an *ekka*-pony, lest worse befall".

In *Plain Tales* is also *The Story of Muhammad Din*, which is a gem of pathos and of the understanding of those mysterious little fat-tummied images behind one's bungalow. This imp envied an old polo ball and was allowed to have it, and also to build castles on the sand in the drive, till he faded away one day with malaria, and was carried, wrapped in a white cloth, to the Moslem burial-ground. *Ay de mi*. That is a story which all the energy of authority can do so little for, and for which Bapoo Gandhi and Congress care nothing. In the East with the children it is "easy come and easy go".

*The House of Saddhu* is a mean little story of a wife and a fortune-teller defrauding an old man, which is told with a wealth of colour that makes it interesting. *Beyond the Pale* is one of the Indian love-stories, illicit at that, that is among the gems from Kipling's pen, and has been entered on at length in the chapter on "Women of the East" (XI).

In *The Second Jungle Book* is interpolated a beautiful truly Indian story that does not belong there, *The Miracle of Purun Bhagat*. The Bhagat is a Brahmin Minister of a prince's State, who has earned the deep approbation of the Government of India and the approval of statesmen in Europe, been rewarded with an Indian knighthood, and then throws in his hand, returns his orders, and steps on to the road as a dust-covered *saddhu*, or Indian religious mendicant and recluse. He comes

to rest on a mountain-top of the Himalayas, spends many years in contemplation, adored of the villagers, and dies in saving them from a landslide. It carries all the heart of Hindu India in its pages. *The Jungle Books* themselves tell more than a little of the aboriginal India of Jan Chinn.

*Without Benefit of Clergy*

*Without Benefit of Clergy* is one of those stories that Adams describes so disparagingly, of one of those super-romantic attachments which now and again some Briton forms, or has formed in the past. It is a perfect love-idyll of its kind, of a kind that belongs in truth to ages long past, and it really belongs to Chapter XI, which treats of *Beyond the Pale*. Holden, a police-officer, has bought Ameera, a beautiful lass, a bud unfolding, from a worldly and worthless old mother, who, being left without money, "would have sold Ameera, shrieking, to the Prince of Darkness if the price had been sufficient"; and they live, as far as she is concerned, a perfect life on a housetop.

"It was a contract entered into with a light heart; but even before the girl had reached her bloom she came to fill the greater portion of John Holden's life. . . . In the house in the city his feet only could pass beyond the outer courtyard to the women's rooms; and when the big wooden gate was bolted behind him he was king in his own territory, with Ameera for queen. And there was going to be added to this kingdom a third person whose arrival Holden felt inclined to resent. . . . But Ameera was wild with delight at the thought of it, and her mother not less so. The love of a man, and particularly a white man, was at best an inconstant affair, but it might, both women argued, be held fast by a baby's hands."

Holden had to go away, and then came back a fortnight later. "Who is there?" he called up the narrow staircase.

"There was a cry of delight from Ameera, and then the voice of the mother, tremulous with old age and pride. 'We be two women—and—the man—thy—son.' . . .

"There is a bond and a heel-rope between us now that nothing can break. Look. . . . Canst thou see in this light? He is without spot or blemish. Never was such a man-child. *Ya Illah!* he shall be a pundit . . . no, a trooper of the Queen. And, My Life, dost thou love me as well as ever, though I am faint and sick and worn? Answer truly.'"

And so it goes on in holy calm and happiness, and old Pir Khan, the servant he has installed for Ameera, makes him

slay a goat by the "Jatka", slicing off the head with one stroke of a sword . . . the birth-sacrifice. It all goes on for some time, happy Ameera, happy little Tota sleeping to the nursery-rhyme of the plums :

Only a penny a pound, *baba*, only a penny a pound.

We will look once more on the idyll before cruel Fate swept it all away, because of the beauty of the miniature painting, this very dainty painting.

"Reassured many times as to the price of those plums, Tota cuddled himself to sleep. The two sleek white well-bullocks in the courtyard were steadily chewing the cud of the evening meal ; old Pir Khan squatted at the head of Holden's horse, his police sabre across his knees, pulling drowsily at a big water-pipe that croaked like a bull-frog in a pond. Ameera's mother sat spinning in the lower verandah and the wooden gate was shut and barred. The music of a marriage procession came to the roof above the gentle hum of the city, and a string of flying-foxes crossed the face of the low moon."

And Holden and Ameera talked, sad, happy, fateful talk, and we had better leave them before the fever carried off Tota, and sweet Ameera dies of the cholera just as Holden returns from a tour of duty. Holden, sore at heart, closes the establishment, the old mother babbling avariciously. A beautiful, sad story, entering more into the heart of things than most folk have power to do.

### *The City of Dreadful Night*

*Little Tobra*<sup>1</sup> and *Motig Guj Mutineer*<sup>1</sup> are little sketches of the people full of colour and understanding. *The City of Dreadful Night*—a hot night in Lahore—is a masterpiece of description :

"Everywhere, in the strong light, you can watch the sleepers turning to and fro ; shifting their beds, and again resettling them. In the pit-like courtyards of the houses there is the same movement. The pitiless moon shows it all. . . . Shows lastly, a splash of glittering silver on a house-top almost directly below the mosque Minar. Some poor soul has risen to throw a jar of water over his fevered body ; the tinkle of the falling water strikes faintly on the ear."

The *muezzin* comes to call the faithful to prayer ; they who can't sleep might well pray.

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<sup>1</sup> *Life's Handicap*.

"The *muezzin* fumbles for a moment with the door of one of the Minars, disappears awhile, and a bull-like roar—a magnificent bass thunder—tells that he has reached the top of the Minar. They must hear the cry to the banks of the shrunken Ravee itself! . . . The cloud drifts by and shows him outlined in black against the sky, hands laid upon his ears, and broad chest heaving with the play of his lungs . . . 'Allah ho Akbar'."

That is a hot night in Lahore in all its weird oppression.

### *In Black and White*

The real colour, drama and tragedy of the Indian humbler folk come in the tales that originally appeared in *In Black and White*.<sup>1</sup> The first is *Dray Wara You Dee*, which is the refrain of a Frontier love-song, and in it Kipling talks with an Afghan horse dealer who asks, "Almonds and raisins, *sahib*? Grapes from Kabul?" (*Badaun o Kismis, Kabuli Angur?*) And they talk intimately and deeply, for he was an old road-acquaintance.

"It is good in the North now. Come back with me. Let us return to our own people! Come!"

. . . . .

"Whence is my sorrow? Does a man tear out his heart and make fritters thereof over a slow fire for aught other than a woman? . . . A woman of the Abazai was she, and I took her to wife to staunch the feud between our village and the men of Ghor. . . . Nay, but I loved her. . . . Coming up the gorge alone . . . I heard the voice of a man singing at the door of my house; and it was the voice of Daoud Shah, and the song that he sang was '*Dray wara you dee*'—'All three are one'. . . ."

They heard him. Daoud Shah fled. The man went mad and cut off his wife's head, and then hacked her to pieces. And now he followed Daoud Shah. A girl of the bazaar told him that Daoud would go to Nowshera, but, fearing for her light o' love, said, "O Pathan, look into my eyes!" When she saw what she saw, she would tell him no more. But *Dray Wara you Dee* was haunting him, and he searched for Daoud Shah to tell him too. "When I have accomplished the matter, and my honour is made clean, I shall return thanks unto God, the Holder of the Scale of the Law, and I shall sleep."—And that is Frontier law. "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth": and a paramour dead for a wife, is as old a law.

<sup>1</sup> Bound up with *Soldiers Three* and *The Story of the Gadsbys*.

*The Judgment of Dungara* takes us far away from civilized Indian India to the Kols—people as aboriginal as the Bhils, over whom Jan Chinn held sway. And among the Buria Kol was “the Reverend Justus Krenk, pastor of the Tübingen mission, and Lotta his virtuous wife”. Matui, after the manner of the people, had exposed her unwanted female babe to die, and the magistrate had found it and brought it to Krenk and his wife.

Matui had watched it, and expected that the little man in the black coat would eat it, but in the morning saw the beautiful white woman carrying the babe in spotless raiment, and came to the hem of Lotta’s skirt. Lotta knew little of the tongue of the Buria Kol, but when mother calls to mother, speech is easy to follow. So Matui became servant in the mission, and Justus smote Moto, the father, for his brutality, and he became servant too. Now a little colony of converts grew and the high priest of the Buria Kol was perturbed. The story is redolent of aboriginal, and also of mission, atmosphere. . . . But Athon Dazé brought them to a pitiful end by giving the mission the fibre of the Nilgiri nettle to weave into shirts, and a beautiful white cloth it made on the mission loom. The senior magistrate of the district and his lady came to see the mission, and the converts for the first time donned their new shirts and were to meet them singing “*Now Thank We All Our God*”. Alas, the nettle fibre soon burnt, like the shirt of Nessus, and all fled to the river shouting, “We burn !”. . . . His converts never came back, and poor Justus at last said : “We will go away, and I will—yes—some botany be-study.” The mission station went back to the jungle.

*At Howli Thana* is a pleasing little life-like sketch of a northern Indian police-station, and of the very slack, typically Indian police in the days before the British started their thorough regeneration thirty years ago. An energetic young magistrate pounces on a sleeping police-station on his then wonderful tricycle, and carries off arms and log-book, leaving them to produce a story of a fierce attack by outlaws, with blood and lesser sword-cuts thrown in. The senior magistrate turns on the junior for allowing such carelessness, but all are confounded when the latter shows the arms he took from the eight sleeping men. It is a good story and prophetic of what the now effective police could easily revert to under too much native management.

*Gemini* is a revealing story of two Indian twins, traders and moneylenders, and the duplicity that they practise. *At Twenty-one* is a love intrigue in an Indian coal-miners’ gang, and *In Flood Time* a story of the great rivers of India and their floods,

and their elephant fords, a story almost entirely of the people.

If you want to read of a great mystic leg-pull that frightened someone very badly, then try *The Sending of Dana Da*, at the end of which the dying juju-worker Dana Da tells the Englishman his life-history :

“*Bunnia* <sup>1</sup>—Mission School—expelled box-waller <sup>2</sup>—Ceylon pearl-merchant—all mine English education—out-casted and made up name Dana Da—England, with American thought-reading man, and—and—you gave me ten rupees several times—I gave the *sahib's* bearer two-eight a month for cats—little, little cats. I wrote, and he put them about—very clever man. Very few kittens in the bazaar. Ask Lone *Sahib's* sweeper's wife.”

The last story in *In Black and White* is of a very different nature to the foregoing little sketches. It is the story of a phase now passed, of some magnate interned in the great fort of Lahore, of the writer's friendship with Lalun the keeper of a House on the Wall, and how she used him. “Lalun is a member of the oldest profession in the world. Lilith was her very-great-grandmama, and that was before the days of Eve, as everyone knows.” But this story or study, written in his very early days, contains immense wisdom and also that off-quoted description of the Indian Civil Service and all it stood, and still stands, for, which may well be quoted in full.

But first the story, which is that while Lalun and a young Moslem, Wali Dad, chat at times with the writer, they are concerned with the old political *détenue* in the fortress hard by, lately brought from Burma to die in his own land, but deep in intrigue once more. He had fought with us in the Sikh War of 1845-6 and been at the great destruction of Sobraon, when the British had dealt with the Sikh Army, which had broken away from control and had invaded British India. What share he had, if any, in 1857, is not recorded, but in the abortive Kuka rebellion of fanatical Sikhs in 1871 he had obviously been concerned.

In the story the old man is obviously in some abortive plot, Lalun assisting. But there is also a great Mohurram riot in progress, and Hindu and Moslem are at each other's throats. In the midst of it Lalun asks Kipling to see an old friend of hers through the crowd. It is in reality the old man, who finds himself out of the cage but in a world quite new to him. A few Sikh troops are hustling the yelling crowds. He had left his aniseed brandy, his dry bed and his silver cooking-pots ; and

<sup>1</sup> Of trader origin.

<sup>2</sup> Pedlar.



those in the plot, such as it was, soon realize that he is but a long-spent force and no use to them. So poor old Khem Singh asks to be sent back, and surrenders, and when Kipling heard the full story he realized how he had been fooled, but that no harm had come. "But I was thinking how I had become Lalun's vizier after all."

That is but the outline, and it is well worth reading for all the deep, effective colour. The quotations, which will serve us still in good stead as a sovereign people who had to put more Europeans into Palestine than quelled the Great Indian Mutiny, may now be given.

After describing the Supreme Government of India, he continues :

"Year by year England sends out fresh drafts for the first fighting-line, which is officially called the Indian Civil Service. These die, or kill themselves with overwork, or are worried to death or broken in health and hope that the land may be protected from death and sickness, famine and war, and may eventually become capable of standing alone. It will never stand alone, but the idea is a pretty one, and men are willing to die for it, and yearly the work of pushing and coaxing and scolding and petting the country into good living goes forward. If an advance be made all credit is given to the native, while Englishmen stand back and wipe their foreheads. If a failure occurs the Englishmen step forward and take the blame. Overmuch tenderness of this kind has bred a strong belief among natives that the native is capable of administering the country, and many devout Englishmen believe this also, because the theory is stated in beautiful English with all the latest political colour. There be other men who, though uneducated, see visions and dream dreams, and they, too, hope to administer the country in their own way—that is to say with a garnish of Red Sauce."

Close on fifty years have lapsed since Kipling wrote the above, and times have, of course, changed, and the intensive development has produced remarkable advances, but there is a definite proportion of it that is as true as the day it was written, as the safeguards in the new Indian Act illustrate. It was not that he did not sympathize with the desire of young India, but that he saw how little as yet was the character of so many, especially of the intelligentsia, equal to the burden they would assume.

Turn from this to Wali Dad, and read the tattle of this charming but disgruntled creature, with the education, for

whom all the world was a Dead Sea fruit ; and again for instruction, but also for joy, read the description of Lalun :

"Lalun has not yet been described . . . she has been variously compared to the Moon, the Dil Sagar Lake, a spotted quail, a gazelle, the sun on the Desert of Kutch, the Dawn, the Stars, and the young Bamboo.

"These comparisons imply that she is beautiful exceedingly according to the native standards, which are practically the same as those of the West. Her eyes are black and her hair is black, and her eyebrows are black as leeches ; her mouth is tiny and says witty things ; her hands are tiny and have saved much money ; her feet are tiny and have trodden on the naked hearts of many men. But as Wali Dad sings, 'Lalun is Lalun, and when you have said that, you have only come to the Beginning of Knowledge.' The little House on the City Wall was just big enough to hold Lalun, and her maid and a pussy-cat, with a silver collar." So there you are, unless you prefer blondes !

### *The Tomb of His Ancestors*

In *The Day's Work* is a remarkable study of a very special phase of Indian aboriginal life, the Bhils of the Satpura Mountains in Central India. To be able to talk as intimately of aboriginals as of the Aryan Rajput and great Jut peasantry of the Punjab shows an unsuspected range of knowledge. Also it is almost the only actual story that gives some inkling of the early British in India. The story soon gets away into Bhil land, and this is how it begins :

"Some people will tell you that if there were but a single loaf of bread in all India it would be divided between the Plowdens, the Trevors, the Beadons, and the Rivett-Carnacs. That is only one way of saying that certain families serve India generation after generation as dolphins follow in line across the open sea."

That is a very true word of all the Services. If you look at the list of cadets leaving Woolwich, Sandhurst, or the Britannia, they contain always the old familiar Army and Navy names. The guerdon is too small for the commercial families.

Kipling, on the top of the above little sermon, traces the generations of the Devonshire Chinnns, beginning from Lieut.-fire-worker <sup>1</sup> Humphrey Chinn, who served at Seringapatam in

<sup>1</sup> There is an unusual mistake here, unless Kipling had some unusual information. Lieut.-fire-worker is an artillery rank, yet he describes Humphrey as the "Bombay European Regiment". Perhaps he joined the Ordnance and took that rank there.

1799, to John Chinn the first, who died young after rendering invaluable service among the wild Bhils, to whom the East India Company erected, as was their wont in those days, a memorial among the Satpura Hills. Lionel Chinn, the son of John Chinn, arrived in time to be severely wounded in the Mutiny, and spent his life too among the Bhils, eventually commanding the Irregular Bhil Corps. His son was born in a small thatched mud bungalow in the heart of the Bhil country.

"Lionel Chinn served thirty years and retired. In the Canal, his steamer passed the outward-bound troopship carrying his son eastward to the family duties. The Chinns are luckier than most folk, because they know exactly what they must do. A clever Chinn passes for the Bombay Civil Service, and gets away to Central India, where everyone is glad to see him. A dull Chinn enters the Police Department, or the Woods and Forests, and sooner or later he too appears in Central India, and that is what gave rise to the saying, 'Central India is inhabited by Bhils, Mairs,<sup>1</sup> and Chinns. All very much alike.' The breed is small-boned, dark, and silent, and the stupidest of them are good shots."

All of which, with its slight satire, tells the story of the romance of some of the old "Indian" families. John Chinn's

"duty was to abide in his father's regiment for the term of his natural life, though the corps was one which most men would have paid heavily to avoid. They were irregulars, small, dark and blackish, clothed in rifle-green with black-leather trimmings. . . . The officers talked to their soldiers in a tongue not two hundred white folk in India understood; and the men were their children, all drawn from the Bhils, who are, perhaps, the strangest of all the many strange races in India. They were, and at heart are, wild men, furtive, shy, full of untold superstitions. The races whom we call Natives of the country found the Bhil in possession. . . . When a Rajput Chief, whose bards can sing his pedigree backwards for twelve hundred years, is set on the throne, his investiture is not complete till he has been marked on the forehead with blood from the veins of a Bhil. . . . The Bhil knows that it is the last shadow of his old rights as the long-ago owner of the soil."

Little John Chinn joins the regiment redolent of all the family traits and likenesses. The officers chuckle even as he arrives; every little habit of his father is evident.

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<sup>1</sup> Mair—another wild race.

"So much for heredity . . . that comes of three generations among the Bhils. 'And the men know it,' said a wing-officer. 'They've been waiting for this youth with their tongues hanging out. . . .'

"Young Chinn, walking like a man in a dream, had fetched a compass round the entire cantonment. . . . The captain's quarters, in which he had been born, delayed him for a little . . . the well on the parade ground where he had sat in the evenings with his nurse . . . the ten-by-fourteen church. . . . From time to time he passed a lot of silent soldiers who saluted. A faint light burned in his room and as he entered hands clasped his feet and a voice murmured from the floor.

" 'Who is it?' said young Chinn, not knowing that he spoke in the Bhil tongue."

It is the senior native officer in all his medals and orders, who had been his father's orderly and always carried the baby.

" 'Has the *Sahib* forgotten who took him to see the trapped tiger in the village across the river, when his mother was so frightened, and he was so brave?' The scene came back to Chinn in great magic-lantern flashes. 'Bukta!' he cries; and all in a breath: 'You promised nothing should hurt me. Is it Bukta?' The man was at his feet a second time. 'He has not forgotten. He remembers his own people as his father remembered. Now can I die. But first I will live and show the *Sahib* how to kill tigers. . . . It is Jan *baba*.' He pushed forward the hilt of his sword as a sign of service. . . ."

And that is the prelude to an astounding story of the boy's life in the regiment—the men worshipping him—he learning his duty, feeling the Bhil in all his veins, and learning to shoot tigers. The real story begins when there is trouble among the Bhils, chiefly owing to the injudicious sending of a vaccinator to a fiercely superstitious district, where the small-pox goddess, Mata-Devi, is much feared. And young Chinn is sent into the district by his Colonel to see what the trouble is—the people believe that old Jan Chinn rides a clouded-tiger o' nights—and young John even visits his grandfather's monument away in the jungles.

All the wild fear and superstition are explored in the story, which will make it amply clear why the Government of India Bill has withheld the aboriginal tracts from the tender mercies and possible follies of, to them, alien Indian politicians. The

story is long and tense and intimate, but the *finale* explains something of what has happened. Chinn reports to his Colonel on his return—the Colonel being also in “political” charge of the district.

“How did you manage to get a Bhil vaccinated?”

“Well, sir,” said Chinn, “. . . as far as I can make out, I’ve got a sort of hereditary influence over ’em.”

“So I know, or I would not have sent you ; but *what* exactly?”

“It’s rather rummy, it seems . . . that I’m my own grandfather reincarnated, and I’ve been disturbing the peace of the country by riding a pad-tiger of nights. . . . And so, Sir, I’ve vaccinated ’em, and shot my tiger-horse as a sort o’ proof of good faith. You never saw such a skin in your life.”

“The Colonel tugged his moustache, thoughtfully. ‘Now how in the deuce,’ said he, ‘am I to include that in my report?’

“And now Bukta is zealous that John Chinn shall swiftly be wedded and impart his powers to a son ; for if the Chinn succession fails, and the little Bhils are left to their own imaginings, there will be fresh trouble in the Satpurus.”

This story is to be read diligently for its romance, its light on the aboriginals, and the glory of the old foundation laid by John Company—the glamour and the glory that staid England will not understand.

### *Interpretation*

In more than one of his earlier writings we have the device of letters written from an Indian to a friend or two of his family. They are written of knowledge as well as of imagination, as studies of Indian methods of thought. In *Kitchener’s School*, already described, the schoolmaster of an Indian regiment, one of the Suakim units, writes a song to his African friends, an appreciation of Lord Kitchener and his plans for the conquered. A somewhat similar opening is used to tell the story *In the Presence*, that of a village conclave, and also in *One View of the Question*,<sup>1</sup> where Shafiz Ullah Khan, an official of an Indian Rajput State, writes from London to a friend, and tries to describe England and her system.

<sup>1</sup> In *Many Inventions*.

The great occasion, however, for this method of expounding is employed in the four stories comprised in *The Eyes of Asia*, published in 1919. These begin with a letter from Subahdar-major Birshen Singh<sup>1</sup> of the 215th Rajputs writing to the retired Resaldar-major of the 146th Horse, who is living on land granted him by the Chief of his State. He writes from the Indian Hospital in the New Forest, where he is being treated for both malaria and a wound in his leg.

He writes that his regiment has gone to Egypt, but he is not fit to go back—all the British officers he knew and who knew him are killed or invalided—he will never be able to drill men again. But he is very content; great honour is shown him, great care taken of him. He writes to his old friend:

“You say I made a mistake to join the War at the end of my service? I have endured five months of it. Come you out and endure two and a half. You are three years younger than I. Why do you sit and drill new men? Remember,

The Brahmin who steals,  
The widow who wears ornaments,  
The Rajput who avoids the battle,  
Are only fit for crows' meat.

“You write me that this is a war ‘for young men’. The old are not entirely useless. The *Badshah* [the King] himself gave me one<sup>2</sup> for bringing in my captain from out of the wires, on my back—your cavalry were useless in France—infantry can fight in this war, not cavalry . . . doubtless the cavalry will show what they are made of in Egypt or Persia.”

Bishen Singh has sized up the nasty ways of the Bosche:

“The nature of the enemy is to commit shame upon women and children, and to defile the shrines of his own faith with his own dung. It is done by him as a drill . . . we did not know they were outcaste. Now it is established by the evidence of our senses . . . when death is certain to them, they offer gifts and repeat the number of their children. . . .

“Now that our troops have gone out of France, the War is entirely between the Enemy and the English. . . . The new wounded officers in the English hospitals say that the battles of even yesterday are not to be compared with the battle of today. . . . Tell this to those who have returned and boast. Only fools will desire more war, when the War

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<sup>1</sup> Subahdar- and Resaldar-major is the senior Indian *sous-officier* in an Indian infantry battalion and cavalry regiment respectively.

<sup>2</sup> A medal.

is ended. . . . This Government have abundance of material and fresh strength is added every hour. Let there be no mistake. The foolish have been greatly deceived in these matters by the nature of the English . . . everything is done and spoken upside-down. He who has a thousand say : 'It is but a burden.' . . . Their boast is not to boast. Their greatness is to make themselves very small. . . . It is not true there is no caste in England. The mark of the high castes, such as Ul or Baharun [Earl or Baron] is that they can perform any office . . . without loss of caste. . . . The high castes are forbidden to show curiosity, appetite, or fear, in public places . . . their male children are beaten from their ninth year to their seventeenth year by men with sticks. . . . The nurses in the hospital of my Baharanee . . . jest with me as daughters with a father."

There is plenty more of it, redolent of how one high-grade old soldier appreciated all that he saw and that had been done for him. There are hundreds of thousands such, who have given to the Crown love and service that money cannot buy.

One such, as he returned from France, was full of the glory and courage of the British soldier, and he said : "In future any drunken English Tamie may kick my back-side and I shan't complain" !—but the English "Tamie" does not get drunk these days ! Nevertheless, it was a high tribute of admiration.

Bishen Singh's letter closes :

"Do not be concerned for whatever overtakes me . . . I am held in the greatest kindness and honour . . . I am like a dying tree in a garden of flowers."

Well and truly has Rudyard Kipling interpreted the method of thought of the Rajput of the old school, which happily is not changing and will preserve for India all that is best in his tradition.

*The Fumes of the Heart* is somewhat different. Here a Sikh soldier, a wheat-farmer of a different race, lies wounded in the Pavilion and Dome Hospital at Brighton in 1915 ; a British officer has offered to write a letter if he will dictate, and the Sikh writes to his brother. It is quite likely that Kipling, who so often visited the Indian hospitals, may have acted as amanuensis. There is some pretty play on what shall be the writer's fee which few save he could have thought of.

The brother is foolish.

"This is the trouble, *sahib*. My brother, who holds his land and works mine, outside Amritsar city, is a fool. He

is older than I. He has done his service and got one wound out of it, in what they used to call war—that child's-play in the Tirah years ago. He thinks himself a soldier ! But that is not his offence. He sends me post-cards, *sahib*—scores of post-cards—whining about the drought, or the taxes, or our servant's pilferings, or some such trouble. I want to tell him he is a fool . . . what ? True ! True ! One can get money and land, but never a new brother ! But for all that . . . My belly is on fire now with knowledge I never had before. I wish to impart it to him. . . . Take down my words from my lips to my foolish old farmer brother."

And so he begins to "put it across him", first telling of his own wound and the wonderful hospital at Brighton :

"This hospital is like a temple. It is set in a garden beside the sea . . . our food is cooked for us according to our creeds . . . we lie on iron cots beneath a dome of gold and colours.

"The French and the Phlamands [Flamands], who are a caste of French, work continually without rest, are kings among cultivators. Now I pray, *sahib*, that you write quickly, for I am as full of this matter as a buffalo of water."

Here follows all that one farmer born would tell another, and the marvel is how deep Kipling's knowledge lay in understanding of the Punjabis yeoman's heart—how they use every yard of land—how the land descends.

"Their lands descend securely from father to son upon payment of tax to the Government, just as in civilized countries. [This is a pretty touch !] They only grow one crop a year, which is compensated for by the fact that they do not need irrigation. [In India the lands must bear two crops.] In Franceville the dogs are both courteous and industrious. They play with the cat, they tend the sheep, they churn the butter, they draw a cart and guard it too."

And now the intimate story of the old grandfather who filled in shell-holes each day. How his grandchild, a small maiden, was killed by a shell, and how the regiment whose buttons she begged and learnt Punjabi of, took revenge :

"The ladies of Franceville work in the fields all day, keep accounts and can't be cheated, and yet are generous and kind and give drinks of hot coffee when we return from the trenches."



And then Bishen Singh gives a commission. A carpet is to be sent, *all charges paid*, to a French lady in whose house he was billeted for three months. She tended him, polished his boots; one son was killed and one wounded in hospital, and one in the trenches.

"I never saw her weep for her dead son, but she wept for me. [What a woman! I had never believed such women existed in this Black Age.] She is an old lady, the carpet must be soft to her feet, and not inclined to slide upon the wooden floor."

The letter is full of charming things that appeal to the Punjabi heart, of the young priests all fighting, of the old French priest who said that "'at such times as these all roads return to God' (our *guru* at home says that himself)".

The whole letter is full of side-lights on the intimate daily life of the War, worth careful perusal for their own sake.

*The Private Account* is quite a different presentment, and the scene is in a tower three and a half miles across the Kohat border in the tribal country. An Afghan woman wrapped in a red-coloured quilt squats on the floor—her husband lies on a cot. He is wounded in the knee and hip by an enemy neighbour. A son aged twenty who has been educated reads from the brother's letter, who is with his regiment in France. These are the running comments. It is a study of trans-border mentality as never done before. The son in France rejoices that the allotment from his pay is reaching them regularly through the British authorities, and that he has sent eleven rupees for the purchase of a "machine" needed in his father's business.

Father draws a cheap nickel-plated revolver from his heart.

"It is a good machine and he is a good son—what else——"

Ahmed has much to say of war and his tribal enemies :

"If in fact anyone wishes to kill me, let them by all means come out here. I am here present in the field of battle. I have placed my life on a tray. The people in our country who talk about killing are children. . . . *We* do not turn our heads if forty are killed at a breath. Have no fear for me, therefore, no matter who joins the Regiment. It needs a very fierce stomach to add anything to our Government rations."

To which his mother remarks : "He writes like a poet, my son. This is wonderful writing." And Father adds : "All the young men write the same with regard to the War. It *quite* satisfies all desires." The son continues to read from the letter :

"The French are a virtuous people and do not steal from each other . . . to take one chicken is to loosen the tongues of fifty old women. I was warned on joining that the testimony of one such would outweigh the testimony of six honourable Pathans."

There is subtlety here ; and the letter describes the appurtenances of French houses, to which Father echoes : "What a country ! How much will he be able to bring back with him?"

"The old women here are skilful in medicines . . . one old woman gave me a herb to chew, for a worm in my tooth [toothache], which cured me in half an hour."

Mother : "God reward that woman ! I wonder what she used !" And so forth. The boy tells of an orphanage. He is acquainted with the *religieuse* at the head of it. "She is very old, very high-born, and of irascible temper. All men call her Mother. The Colonel himself salutes her." Mother chips in : "Ha ! Well, at least that holy woman was well-born ; but she is too free with her tongue !"—and so forth till down in the village the *muezzin* is heard calling to prayer, and the family in the town compose themselves. It is very intimate talk of the Pathan mind, and Kipling is showing, too, how all mothers are the same.

There is one more—*A Trooper of Horse*. A trooper writes to his mother, a well-born Mussalmani in the Punjab. The lad describes how he will come home and how she will pet him, and how in the morning he will swagger out and greet his friends. "Mother, put your trust in God to guard my head. If my grave lies in France it can never be in the Punjab, though we try for a thousand years . . . meanwhile, Mother, consider what I eat", for the wonderful rations amazed all our Indian soldiers. "So I beg you, Mother, to take comfort concerning your son. Do not tear my heart by telling me your years."

He also is billeted with a Frenchwoman, whose goodness he recounts, and tells of her grandson Pir, and of a cemetery in which he was on duty for three nights ; but none troubled him ; and how a shell exhumed the corpse of a woman newly dead, whom they reburied for the sake of the "pity of Allah".

It is the most human of all the letters, and full of colour. The boy tells of the sympathy and understanding of the people.

## CHAPTER XI

### WOMEN OF THE EAST

Black Velvet—*Lispeth of the Mission*—Velvet in Burma—*Beyond the Pale*—*Constancy*—The Gipsy Queen—The Chambers of the South—*The Woman of Shamlegh*.

#### *Black Velvet*

My father was of ancient name  
What may his daughter claim ?

"BLACK VELVET" is a somewhat light and irreverent phrase that years ago was in use in India for Indian beauty. "Fond of Black Velvet" was a phrase for those whom Indian women attracted. How attractive Indian women can be is now known to many since the honourable women have come out of *Purdah*. Those who know the old cantonments will know how many a bungalow is still standing with the *zenana*, the quarters of the Indian lady, connected with the *sahib's* bungalow by a sheltered tiled alleyway. In more modern days "Black Velvet" is applied to beauty frail as well as fair, but it was not always so. Officers and civilians allied themselves with ladies of high degree. Hyder Harsey and Gardiner married the Begums of Cambay, wards of the Mogul himself. The famous James Skinner, or "Old Sekunder" of the "Yellow Boys", was the son of a Rajputni lady of rank and a company's officer. The mother of Sir Richard Warburton of the Khaiber was an Afghan lady of the Royal House of Kabul, and so forth.

India is full of such stories, and the whole history of the Anglo-Indian folk in India, the descendants of the mixed marriages and less regular unions, is one of romance and often pathos and tragedy.

There is an immense mine of wealth to the story-teller in this subject, yet curiously it is one that Kipling has not touched on to any very great extent so far as the older stories go. Rather does he present the drama and pathos of modern liaison and companionate marriage. Perhaps the earliest point in his literary career where he touched on the subject was in *Lispeth of the Mission*. Lispeth is but Pahari <sup>1</sup> for Elizabeth, and the story is taken from the well-known Simla story of Elizabeth, and incidentally of *Lachman Halwai*, or Lachman the sweet-

<sup>1</sup> Hill language.

seller, who for so many years had a sweet-stall on the mall, near to a house that from him is known to the older race of *jhampanies* as "*Lachman Halwai ki Kothi*"—the house of Lachman the sweet-seller.

We will look to the true story of it before we see Lispeth as drawn for us by Kipling. A hundred years ago and more there came to India as a cadet a gentleman who was said to be a relative, on the distaff side, of the Earl of Portmore. He it was who built the still famous old house of Portmore at Simla. As the years passed by, the officer in question went on the Invalid Establishment and came to reside in Simla, and there he married a beautiful hill-girl from a village in the hills beyond, who was baptized by the mission away on the Great Tibet Road as Elizabeth. For her the Colonel built the old house in the hills behind Simla at Mahasu, known to this day as "Elizabeth's Bower", or "The Bower", which folk say is haunted by Elizabeth herself.

Elizabeth in the fullness of time died, perhaps at "The Bower", but she was buried in the garden of a house called Juba, in Simla itself. In fact, a generation later, when the owners wanted to make a tennis-court, her remains were removed, after some legal proceedings of inhibition, to the old cemetery. But when Elizabeth married her Colonel she was already *enceinte* to a lad of her own people, after the lax ways of the hill-folk, whether baptized or otherwise. Her son, born in honourable wedlock, was therefore the putative grandson of an Irish earl, and the Colonel brought him up without further question among his own children that followed. Later he became the sweet-seller, and passed the time of day with all who passed his stand by the roadside; and especially was he beloved of English children, who bought his jumbles unbeknownst to their mamas.

That is the true story of Elizabeth of "The Bower", who for our delight became Lispeth of the Mission, a true and sympathetic study of a little baptized hill-girl of the Himalaya, and a tempted and thoughtless young Englishman, and the pathos of such happenings as Kipling sees and feels them.

This is the drama of Lispeth :

### *Lispeth of the Mission*

In summertime I saw a face  
*Belle pour moi. Hélas ! Hélas !*

Lispeth was a hill-girl from the hills behind Simla, originally given to the Kotgarh mission on the Great Tibet Road to be

baptized, principally because under the old gods bad luck had beset her parents, and they wanted to invoke the God of the English. Cholera carried them off later, and Lispeth remained half-maid, half-companion to the wife of the chaplain, learning the ways of the West with singular ease, and growing up supremely and superbly beautiful, as now and again the hill-girls do. She was profoundly happy in the mission, and repudiated any idea that she should go into Simla to improve her position.

Then it happened one day that down the hillside in one of the long walks which were nothing to her hill legs, she discovered, senseless at the bottom of a cliff, a young Englishman, with a deep cut in his head. She brings him home to the mission, and tells the chaplain's wife that as soon as he recovers she will marry him. It was a fortnight before he could speak, and then he enjoyed his convalescence, chatting and playing with Lispeth harmlessly enough, a bright and happy pastime, the girl graceful and beautiful, and wishful enough to be petted in a harmless way.

The chaplain's wife then told him how it was with Lispeth and bade him to be discreet. He could but laugh and say "How charming!" but that he was engaged to a girl at home. Nevertheless the chaplain's wife, knowing how deeply the untutored day-springs had been stirred, said he could only get away if he told her he was coming back to marry her. It was a dangerous if pious lie, and the lad interpreted it too literally, for he walked the twelve miles to Narkunda with her, his arm around her waist. For months she watched for his return, walking miles each day towards Simla to meet him.

When, alas, she found that she had been lied to, the poor lass threw her civilization to the winds. Back she went to her gods and hill-folk, married a woodman who beat her, lost her looks, and so returned to the matrix whence she sprang. The Englishman had been honourable enough as such things go, but it might even have been better for poor Lispeth had it been otherwise, for the ways of the East are not the ways of the West. That is the end of the story, and when you come to think of it there is nothing in it, just the story—or a beautiful frame—of a simple woman of good intent who was drawn from her natural course and not allowed to justify herself. Perhaps it is meant to be a warning against mingling the day-springs of nature between continents, as is now so frequent as to be almost a fashion, and the results of which are yet to be seen.

Before we leave the train of thought that *Lispeth of the Mission* has called forth, let me tell the story of another hill-girl from

the mission, or at any rate from a hill village of which I have some personal ken. Towards the end of the last century, there died in the little cantonment of Jutogh, some three miles away from Simla, an old hill-woman who resided in a slightly superior mud cottage in the Jutogh bazaar. She left a will in terms which brought the matter into the hands of the cantonment committee. She left her money, which would be found buried under the floor of her living-room, to be divided among her two sons, Willie *baba* and Johnnie *baba*. Who Willie and Johnnie were, and where they could be found, did not transpire.

After inquiry it was found that many years before, an officer of the "extra" battalion of Gurkhas, the Nusserie Battalion, had married a hill-girl, a "Lispeth of the Mission", whether by bell and book, or on companionate terms, did not appear. To him she bore two children, Willie and Johnnie, and their father had at least done something by them rather than left them to swell that subordinate race of Anglo-Indians who now find life in India so hard. They had been taken from the mother and educated in England. "Lispeth", suitably pensioned, had lived out her life, in some slight dignity when younger, in the bazaar, and had never seen her children again. But all the while she cherished her mother's memory and saved her pittance for them, a pathetic enough story. Eventually they, Willie *baba* and Johnnie *baba*, were found, one a farmer in the United States, the other the commander of a sailing-barque on the Californian coast, and received the legacy of their long-forgotten mother, themselves now approaching the sere and yellow.

### *Velvet in Burma*

When every *lugale*  
Should kiss his *mingale*.

There is one form of velvet to which the British have been much given—far simpler, far more attractive in the simpler cases, but almost entirely without that fierce drama or intense romance that can beat round the greater of mixed loves in India proper.

Ever since the occupation of Burma it has been the custom of certain of the officers of all Services, and of the traders, to take unto themselves in a companionate attachment the young women of that country. Very charming are these somewhat Japanesque little ladies of Burma, with their white jackets, their coloured skirts, and the roses in their hair.

Very different are they in their way from the secluded women of India. Merry and chatty, and ready for a jest at any

time with friend or stranger, they make the bazaars of Burma singularly attractive. They are good and faithful to the men whom they marry by an extremely simple Burmese form which leaves them no sort of social slur. Since the Burman is lazy and has very distinct ideas as to who shall work, Burman girls will marry for choice, in the order of preference given, men of other races who do not want the rice husked in the early hours of the morning by their wives. This is the order—British, Chinese, Indian and Burman.

Now, when a lady has been in the, to her, perfectly legal and honourable estate of companionate marriage with a European, and when, as is the usual custom after some years, she retires to her own village, with the property, jewellery and gifts that she has acquired during her coverture, she takes a high social position. She may marry *en secondes nocés* a Chinese trader and live happily ever afterwards. To her, the liaison, which for her is a marriage, does no sort of harm, whatever it may do to her man. On the good side be it said that she is an admirable housekeeper and charming companion, with her guitar and her whacking white cheroot, and that many officers would have lost their lives from malaria and bad food if it had not been for these devoted little wives.

The problem of children has been referred to, and how it was the fashion to assign them to a competent guardian, and arrange that they shall be well started in local life. That again is by no means an ideal condition, for the British should not scatter their children "like old cigar-ends" round the earth. They do, and in the Burman story the wives are anxious for offspring.

Now, though it has been said that the women when the time comes for their *sahibs* to leave Burma accept and acquiesce with good grace, it has not always been so. Sometimes the casual Saxon has buried himself very deep in the Mongoloid heart, and the said hearts are sadly broken; all the more so was this in the early days, when the women did not accept or know the ultimate condition from the start. It is of these early days that Kipling strikes for us a note of great pathos in *Georgie Porgie*.

Georgie Porgie, be it remarked, was the nickname among his friends for a very efficient officer, because he sang so well a Burman song that began with words that sounded thus. For many years he had lived in Burma with a charming and devoted Burman girl who is referred to as Georgina. His money she saved for him, and his health and comfort had been her constant care. But after some years her man thought he had had enough, and he would take six months' leave. She—for it was in

the early days of the British in Burma, and she looked not for her idyll to end—had to be deceived. She could not be told that he sought six months' furlough. In fact, she was told taradiddles, and was with difficulty persuaded to go to her home. Alas, poor Georgina !

But in England Georgie Porgie married a charming English girl, and on returning to the East he gets a hill-station in India, far away from his old province, and very happy he and his bride are. And all the time little Georgina is broken-hearted, and, finally getting some inkling of her *Thakin's*<sup>1</sup> whereabouts, seeks him in India. She was very cold and wet as she made her way up to the Indian hill-station, and very short of food. On the mall, seeking his residence, Gillis, Georgie Porgie's former assistant, finds her.

“ ‘Good heavens ! What are you doing here ?’

“ ‘I have come,’ said Georgina simply. ‘It was such a long way, and I have been months coming.’ . . . Gillis gasped.”

Explanations would be difficult, demonstration easier.

“ ‘I will take you there’ ” ;

and he led her to the drawing-room window, and there within was Georgie Porgie and his English bride.

Poor Georgina ! She breaks away from Gillis down the hillside with the racking cough that she has caught, and runs off into the dark. Gillis, unable to find her, goes off sadly, saying that he would have her sent back.

The bride and bridegroom come out into their verandah after dinner.

“ ‘What is that noise down there ?’ said the bride.

“ ‘Oh,’ said Georgie Porgie, ‘I suppose some brute of a hill-man has been beating his wife.’

“ ‘Beating—his—wife ! How ghastly !’ said the bride.

“ ‘Fancy *your* beating *me* !’ She slipped an arm round her husband's waist, and leaning her head against his shoulder looked out across the cloud-filled valley, in deep content and security.”

But it was Georgina crying all by herself down the hillside among the stones of the watercourse where the washerman washes the clothes. That is Kipling's story of Brown Burman Velvet.

Could any tragedy bite deeper ? Poor little Ma-Shwe-Ma, that we have called Georgina. Usually things are managed better today. The idyll while it lasts is a happy one, and I have

<sup>1</sup> Burmese for “Lord”.



a very keen recollection of boarding a small river steamer high up on the upper reaches of the Irrawadi to find a subaltern of military police and a Burman girl in the only cabin, and children, almost English, with an *ayah* on the deck outside, an orderly laying out toy bricks and soldiers on the deck.

### *Beyond the Pale*

He whose strenuous tongue can burst joy's  
Grapes against his palate fine.

Now and again an affair of, or with, Black Velvet ends in sheer tragedy. "Cursed be he that removeth his neighbour's landmark, *and here the people shall say Amen.*" It is one thing to marry an Indian lady, as many a *sahib* has done in the past—*sab tik and achcha*<sup>1</sup> with her relatives' approval—or to consort with some slut about whom nobody cares, and quite another to meddle with some high-grade lass who is not yours by any manner of argument. Of such is the story of Trejago and little Bissessa as told in *Beyond the Pale*, with all the glamour and attraction of Eastern colour as few save Kipling can give. It ranks in prose as *The Love Song of Har Dyal*—which, indeed, first appeared in this very story—does in-verse.

. . . The glamour of Thy footsteps in the North.  
Come back to me, Beloved, or I die.

Trejago—I misdoubt the name is a disguise—came wandering, poking his nose, as some Englishmen will, into an Indian city, and, following a certain gully, found himself in a blind alley. A silver voice behind a grating laughed at his plight. As it was a pretty little laugh, Trejago, not unversed in Eastern love and knowing that the old *Arabian Nights* are a good guide, sang a verse from *The Love Song of Har Dyal* aforesaid :

If my feet fail me, O Heart of my Heart,  
Am I to blame . . . ?

Trejago's tactics were the right ones ; the voice takes up the song at a later verse, and there is that wholly devastating *tchink* of bracelets. Trejago walked out of the alley wondering. Next morning an old woman threw a packet into his dog-cart, a message, a letter unintelligible, uncompromising, but entirely decipherable to one who knew and could think. Among the objects was a broken bangle, and that means a widow all India over.

That must be excuse for a diversion. Remember that in

<sup>1</sup> Everything in order.

high-caste India, when child marriages are made and consummation ensues as early as may be, widows, even virgin child-widows, may not remarry. They remain, head shaved, bangles broken, void of all possessions, clothed in white clothes, a drudge in their in-laws' house for ever. *For ever!* Cursed be they whose evil star has brought their man prematurely to the funeral-pyre. Be they never so young, be they never so beautiful, love and life have gone for ever. Because it was so, it was a better life to mount the funeral-pyre and go with your man, all the world acclaiming—as now and again, despite law and police, one does. The voice was that of a widow, perhaps a virgin widow, bored stiff and lonely, and ready for diversion. Many such break out and end their days with Lalun, since no one cares.

Trejago reads and guesses at the letter, and interprets an assignation, which he keeps. He judged it meant that night, and he went clad in a *burqa*, the great hooded garments of high-grade Moslem women. The inevitable old hand-maiden assisted: a season of love, of passion, of enchantment begins. Bisesa, ignorant, charming, isolated, fascinates him. It is a pretty scene when Bisesa, like many another before and since, asks her man if he is quite, quite sure he loves her. Unfortunately Trejago quite innocently has occasion to pay some attention to a white woman of the station. Bisesa's duenna hears and tells the child; she, like many another, will listen to no explanation, is heart-broken—little trusting soul!—and bids him go, protesting. In vain Trejago would explain, and says she does not understand Western ways. Says the woman-child:

“‘I do not know. I only know this—it is not good that I should have made you dearer than my own heart to me, *Sahib*. You are an Englishman. I am only a black girl’—she was fairer than bar-gold in the Mint—‘and the widow of a black man.’”

No arguments would soothe her, and he went; and as he dropped from the window the sobbing lass kissed his forehead twice.

After three weeks and still no sign of Bisesa, Trejago went down to Amir Nath's gully and rapped on the sill of the shifting grating. He was not disappointed. It was moonlight, and from the black dark Bisesa held out two stumps from which the hands had been cut, now nearly healed. As Bisesa sobs, a knife, a spear, is thrust at him in his *burqa*, someone grunts like a wild beast, and Trejago is wounded in the groin. He goes mad and finds himself at dawn on the river-bank.

When he recovers he cannot find the house or where the front is. Bisesa, sweet, good Bisesa, who once was a virgin widow, has been swallowed up in that great native city, and Trejago limps for the rest of his life.

There is drama and passion, and we can realize the charm and slim beauty of the child with the mint-gold skin, a child of Nature, condemned of a cruel system, very much true woman, worthy of respect and admiration.

Nor can we quite blame Trejago, for as Sir Charles Napier, the Commander-in-Chief in India, remarked in quashing sentence on an officer in a case where the lady had been forthcoming, "History records no second Joseph." The poor velvet stumps like the horns of a stag are sad to reflect on.

But what can we say of the artist who tears out our hearts in his manner of telling the sweet, wild, and bitter story? It is one of Kipling's purest gems of story-telling.

### *Constancy*

The face that launched a thousand ships.

There is the story of the Deccan, no doubt some village tale, that Kipling sings in that terrible disaster of Panipat, the "Battle of the Black Mango Tree", in which the Afghans of the north, coming to the assistance of the Afghan colonists of India, destroy the Mahratta hosts. That is sheer history, and does not matter here, save that we may note the dramatic, cryptic bankers' message by which the evil news sped to the money-cellars of India, and thence to the widowed homes. This is how the message ran :

"Two pearls of great price have been destroyed, twenty-seven gold *mohrs* lost, and of the silver and copper the total cannot be cast up."

The mourning of the silver and copper reigned in every homestead in the Deccan and in the Konkan.

However, that is outside this saga. But speaking of women, it is another matter. Kipling sings this village ballad of the flight from this battlefield in *With Scindia to Delhi*. Sindia, as we now spell the Scindia of the older books, is the title of one of the great Chiefs of the pirate confederacy in India, now boiled down to be a premier prince, of the State of Gwalior.

All the Mahratta chivalry rode to Delhi, and thence fifty miles north to Panipat, to meet the Afghan menace. With them, with plenty of his horse, went Scindia the "*Patel*", to use the affectionate name his people knew him by. With him more important than them all was a maid for whom the world

was well lost ; and when the Afghan swords were at work on the broken Indians, and man could do no more, Scindia turned and rode for the south, and with him on his saddle-bow was the lass.

He set a spell upon the maid in woodlands long ago,  
A hunter by the Tapti banks she gave him water there :  
He turned her heart to water, and she followed to her woe,  
What need had he of Lalun who had twenty maids as fair ?

The tale is told in the voice of the faithful squire who rode behind the pair and warded off the blows of the pursuers :

He bound the girl behind him and we slashed and struggled free.

Close on their heels rode an Afghan, Lutuf-Allah Populzai, "a swine-fed riever of the north, that lusted for the maid". League after league they heard the Populzai behind ; the horses tire, and the double weight tires Scindia's mare. The squire urges the master to cut loose the girl and ride alone.

Then Scindia 'twixt his blistered lips : "My Queens' Queen shall she be."

Of all who ate my bread last night 'twas she alone that came  
To seek her love between the spears and find her crown therein !

The white mare failed a-fast.

Yea, Delhi Town was very near when Lalun whispered : "Slay !  
Lord of my life, the mare sinks fast—stab deep and let me die."

Scindia would not, but the girl, to save him, cut herself away, with the clattering Populzai close behind. He checks his dying mare—who fell on him :

. . . Before he heard the maiden's piteous scream  
A log upon the Delhi Road, beneath the mare he lay—  
Lost mistress and lost battle passed before him like a dream.

His henchman later was able to bear him away, and that is the household tale of the Deccan. Love and mad devotion of the glorious kind we love to hear of.

### *The Gipsy Queen*

Murmured the winds and whispered the water,  
This was the rhyme of the Queen's daughter.

In discussing the characters of Kipling's long stories I have remarked on the strength of the secondary but far more forceful character of the Naulahka, the low-caste, brilliant gipsy Queen of the Maharajah of Rhatore, the mistress of

passion skilfully engendered. And an extract from the most stirring of the scenes in which she figures can but grace this discourse on Black Velvet. The scene is set out in the jungles, on a soft, warm night, at the assignation to which Sitabhai had summoned the man who was thwarting her intimate schemes. But Tarvin himself was a very proper man, and this had not escaped the love-Queen who had to put up with lesser stuff for the sake of her place in the world. Here again a world-old theme is struck, as in the American city of Topaz, when we see Tarvin having the same effect on the glorious Western lady married to the elderly President of the Three C's. If you ever saw Delysia in the role of the world's most beautiful "allures" through the ages, you would remember that note too.

However, that is a different matter to this burning interlude with Sitabhai after she and Tarvin seated themselves on the slab of a tomb, shaded from the full glare of the moon—the Moon Goddess, that wise old Babylon set above all things, with her love-chamber on the topmost layer of the Zigurrat.

In their heart-to-heart talk, each aware of the allure of the other, Sitabhai for the moment ceases to be the intriguing, adventuress Queen and becomes very much a loving woman.

See how sad thy Venus lies,  
*N'oserez vous, mon bel ami.*

Sweet Adon, darest not glance thy eyes ?  
*N'oserez vous, mon bel ami.*

So runs Infida's song in the Lydian mode. . . . Because he is a full he-man she would rule with his help behind the scenes, as has been done in India before by a European. She and he are not like ordinary people.

"'Look here,' said Tarvin reverently, as he took her hand from his shoulder, and held it firmly in his clutch again. 'Are there many of you in India?' 'But one. I am like yourself . . . alone.' Her chin dropped against his shoulder and she looked up at him with eyes as dark as the lake. The scarlet mouth and the quivering nostrils were so close to his own that the fragrant breath swept his cheek."

There is a hoarse barking cough heard that sends Tarvin to his feet, but the Queen explains that it is only the famous tiger of the sacred tank. He turns to her again.

She nestles close to him, and as he sinks beside her on the stone again his arm slips unconsciously about her waist.

We need not follow it, for as we know Tarvin was after the necklace.

But the Queen is in a sentimental mood no more.

“‘I do not know whether I could trust myself, for after a time it might be that I should be a servant who have always been queen. I have come near to casting my heart under the hoofs of your horse . . . not once, but many times.’ She put her arms round his neck and joined them there, gazing into his eyes and drawing his head down to hers. ‘Is it a little thing,’ she cooed, ‘if I ask you to be my king? In the old days, before the English came, Englishmen of no birth stole the hearts of begums.’ . . . She was very lovely as she stretched her arms appealingly out to him in the half-light; but he was there for other things!”

It is a wistful note that the writer strikes for us, such as would wake old broken strings to melody . . . and but a new chapter on “*comment elles se donnent*”.

But when all is said and done, let us marvel that the pen that wrote the *Drums of the Fore and Aft* should also be able to touch this note of intense thrill and passion.

### *The Chambers of the South*

There are two Black Velvet ballads that are very different in their tenor, and both are ballads of the British soldier in the East who is, or was, given to women as he is to wine, to quote Francis Bacon once again. The great body of the Anglo-Indians owe their origin to the matings of Mr. Atkins in ages gone by, or more often of Tim Flinnagan, for the company's soldiers came from the distressful land—distressful, but like that “battery of the corps, first among the women and amazing first in war”.

But it is the little girls of the humble classes that dare to make love to Atkins, or let him make love to them. The stately woman of the higher castes or of the Moslem *zenana* have married the British official in the past to make some of the higher families of Anglo-India, but those to whom Atkins can appeal are of simple and less reputable kidney. Of the loves of the soldier, *Mandalay* must stand out for all time as one of the world's love-ballads, when the courting of Brown Velvet as therein recorded is a thing of beauty. We need not even quote what is so well known and so oft sung, but that line of the “neater sweeter maiden in a cleaner greener land” is the last thing in lingering, glamorous regret, and the triumphant line rings true enough, “plucky lot she cared for idols, when I

kissed her where she stud!" that staunch and acquiescent Burman *mingale*.<sup>1</sup>

*The Ladies* strikes a frankly Casanova line. "I've taken my fun where I found it", after the manner of "martial men" the world round, which is no doubt why they are so popular and have caused anxiety to the "cit". What more human than the memory of his teacher, "Aggie de Castrer"—"more like a mother she were".

But like the soldier of *Mandalay*, the Burman girl fills the bill supremely—not, apparently, the "Woman at Prome", who is another story. This one struck the true Burman note of the *mingale* with her white braided jacket, the cheroot in a slit in the ear, and a rose in her coal-black hair.

Funny an' yellow an' faithful,  
Doll in a teacup she were.

There is drama and tragedy around the sixteen-year-old convent girl whose trouble was love at first sight, the "straightest I ever 'ave seen".

And I wouldn't do such, 'cause I liked 'er too much,  
But . . . I learned about women from 'er.

And the moral of the song—and Kipling has a moral for us all to mark and learn :

The more you 'ave known of the others  
The less you will settle to one.

Which is but the inside out of the saying that "all men are different and all husbands the same". How does this wise and roguish ballad end? Why,

What did the Colonel's Lady think?  
Nobody never knew.

### *The Woman of Shamlegh*

It would not be right to omit from the coloured velvets mention of the ladies of *Kim*. Two stand out therefrom, both full of charm, the old Rajputni from the hills with the heart of gold, and the Woman of Shamlegh. The rest are nothing at all; but who but Kipling could show that old soul, with a craving for grandsons and a tongue like a mill clapper, whose command of abuse—biting, fluent and incisive, if need be—would put a man of the sea to shame, but whose heart was wax for Kim and his *lama*.

The Woman of Shamlegh has her two husbands, for some of the hill-folk are polyandrous, and the husbands form up to

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<sup>1</sup> Girl.

go in residence by roster. He whose turn at home it is leaves his shoes outside the door like an hotel passage, and no one dare gainsay his right. The Woman of Shamlegh was once brought up in a mission school and might even have been Lispeth of the Mission, only we are told that Lispeth, when her *sahib* would not return, married a hill-man who beat her, while the Woman of Shumlegh here drove her own pair of husbands—a very different matter. But she had had an English lover in her younger days, she that is now a handsome, buxom land-owner. She does not realize that Kim is a white boy, but she tells him that he has the face of a *sahib*, and how she has known real *sahibs*. She and Kim are sparring a little when as he is going she says, "Shall I show thee how *sahibs* render thanks?"

"'I am but a wandering priest,' says shameless Kim. . . .

"'Nay. But for one little moment . . . thou canst overtake the *dooli* in ten strides. . . . *If* thou wast a *sahib*, shall I show thee what thou wouldst do?"

"'How if I guess, though?' said Kim, and putting his arm round her waist, he kissed her on the cheek, adding in English, 'Thank you verree much, my dear.'

"'Kissing is practically unknown among Asiatics, which may have been the reason that she leaned back with wide-open eyes, and a face of panic.

"'Next time,' Kim went on, 'you must not be so sure of your heathen priests.'"

(Remember that Kim was but a small lad, and white lads come on fast in the East, like their brown brothers. That is why it is better to get them out of the country early. Girls can be kept sheltered.)

Kim continues :

"'Now I say good-bye'. He held out his hand English fashion. She took it mechanically. 'Good-bye, my dear.'

"'Good-bye and—and'—she was remembering her English words one by one—'you will come back again? Good-bye and—thee God bless you.'"

It is a pretty idyll of the comely owner of two husbands wanting an English kiss, and remembering a little of the days when an English arm had been round her waist. Oh yes, they do remember such things in all lands and all colours—happily, as Kipling so sweetly reminds us. Perhaps after all she *was* Lispeth of the Mission.



## CHAPTER XII

### TO SUIT OUR MOODS AND PHASES

Moods and Phases—Sorrow and Grief—Nostalgia—Poor Broken Men—His  
Psychic Stories—Tragedy—Extravaganza.

#### *Moods and Phases*

WE are so used to the great vigour and *joie de vivre* in all that Kipling wrote that we are often surprised to find how he too can fit the mood and salve it for all those who are in sorrow and perplexity, and those who are desolate and oppressed. As the world's greatest stimulant, "*If*" is beyond the power of comment, that poem that stood before William Hohenzollern on his table as his misguided spirit urged the world to destruction—or, as some say, tried to save it from its destiny—when *mole ruit sua*.

Nor need we dwell on the poems of great occasions—*Recessional*, or the odes to France and Lord Roberts, or that greatest of poems which he would have written when King George died, and which may have found expression as they crossed the bourne together. If you would be sad, as all of us at times delight to be, what more can minister to that mood than *The Answer*, which was written so far back as 1892, in the very days of the rough soldiery and their wars? It is full of the sadness of things and that *heimweh* which we sometimes feel on God's brightest days :

A Rose in tatters on the garden path,  
Cried out to God and murmured 'gainst His wrath  
Because a sudden wind at twilight's hush  
Had snapped her stem alone of all the bush.

A voice said, "Father, wherefore falls the flower?  
For lo, the very gossamers are still."  
And a voice answered, "Son, by Allah's will!"  
Then softly as a rain-mist on the sward,  
Came to the Rose the answer of the Lord:  
"Sister, before we smote the dark in twain,  
Ere yet the stars saw one another plain,  
Time, Tide, and Space We bound unto the task  
That thou shouldst fall, and such an one should ask."  
Whereat the withered flower, all content,  
Died as they die whose days are innocent.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This was probably written of Rose Aylmer, who died in Calcutta many a year ago, and the world seemed to stop for all who knew of her, the most beautiful girl of her age. Her monument still stands.

Perhaps Kipling had buried, as I have helped bury, the most beautiful girl in India, in black deal boards, tacked with black cotton, whose twenty happy years had "snapped alone of all the bush", someone to meet whom had clanked the *tonga*-bar.

And if you mourn over those on whom the summer seas cast death, this poet of war wrote in 1890 *The Gift of the Sea*, which again goes deep to the tears of things :

The dead child lay in the shroud,  
And the widow watched beside ;  
And her mother slept, and the Channel swept  
The gale in the teeth of the tide.

But the mother laughed at it all,  
"I have lost my man in the sea  
And the child is dead. Be still !" she said.  
"What more can ye do to me ?"

But there was a whimper outside and the widow lifted the latch :

And opened the door on the bitter shore  
To let the soul go free.

But the widow could not bide within and went out to the wind-bit pier :

She came to the life she had missed by an hour,  
For she came to a little child.

But it would not feed and it would not heed,  
Though she gave it her own child's name.

And "God forgive us, Mother," she said,  
"We let it die in the dark !"

The poet must have been more than sad himself the day that he wrote of this double sadness.

If you be among those who delve for cities dead and gone, for Babylon and Nineveh, or for Gaza and Hesbon, what is wrong with this for your mood ?—and it is called *The Palace*, and no one knows the story better than Leonard Woolley.

When I was a King and a Mason—a Master proven and skilled—  
I cleared me of ground for a palace such as a King should build.  
I decreed, and dug down to my levels. Presently, under the silt,  
I came on the wreck of a palace such as a King had built.

And with it comes the refrain, carven on every stone :

After me cometh a Builder. Tell him I too have known.

And if you have ever had wistful doings with her who could not hold happiness, then commit *Blue Roses* to your memory :

Roses red and roses white  
Plucked I for my love's delight.  
She would none of all my posies . . .  
Bade me gather her blue roses.

Half the world I wandered through,  
Seeking where such flowers grew.

Home I came at wintertide,  
But my silly love had died,  
Seeking with her latest breath  
Roses from the arms of death.

Roses white and red are best ; with them is life the easier lived.

There is the wistful longing that all men feel for the things that they might have done, and if you feel that mood well, see what Kipling says of it first in *The Sack of the Gods*—of hopes when hopes were high :

Strangers drawn from the ends of the earth, jewelled and plumed  
were we ;  
I was the Lord of the Inca race, and she was the Queen of the Sea.  
Under the stars beyond our stars where the reinless  
meteors glow  
Hotly we stormed Valhalla, a million years ago.

She with the star I had marked for my own—I with my  
set desire—  
Lost in the loom of the Night of Nights . . . 'wildered by worlds  
afire.

He saw the dreams that the young folk dream and—if they are lucky—can talk of without regret at their failure ! If you cannot see it all with the philosopher's eye, then mourn with *The Kingdom* :

Now we are come to our Kingdom,  
But my love's eyelids fall.  
All that I wrought for, all that I fought for,  
Delight her nothing at all.  
My crown is of withered leaves,  
For she sits in the dust and grieves,  
Now we are come to our Kingdom !

There was another writer who translated from the ballads of the Punjab, and he sang the same song thus :

You played and lost the game ?  
 Your life was waste  
 Perhaps your share lay in the hour you laughed and kissed.  
 Your son may live to gain  
 The honours that his father missed.

This is how they feel among the children who plan for their life to come ; a chapter-heading from *The Light that Failed* :

So we settled it all when the storm was done  
 As comfy as comfy could be ;  
 And I was to wait in the barn, my dears,  
 Because I was only three,  
 And Teddy would go to the rainbow's foot,  
 Because he was five and a man.  
 And that's how it all began, my dears,  
 And that's how it all began.

Do you feel the burden of gravity ? Do you want to break away from the solemnity of office, from the routine of ship and barrack, from the responsibility of the directors' board, to go to the Riviera and escape a while from ceremony and solemnity ? Then sing with Diego Valdez, High Admiral of Spain. You remember how he sang :

To me my King's much honour,  
 To me my people's love—  
 To me the pride of Princes  
 And the power all pride above. . . .

But it had not always been so, for :

But I remember comrades—  
 Old playmates on new seas—  
 When as we traded orpiment  
 Among the savages . . .

Yet :

Then walked no wind 'neath Heaven  
 Nor surge that did not aid—  
 I dared extreme occasion,  
 Nor ever one betrayed.  
 They wrought a deeper treason—  
 (Led seas that served my needs !).  
 They sold Diego Valdez  
 To bondage of great deeds.

There walks no wind 'neath Heaven,  
 Nor wave that shall restore  
 The old careening riot  
 And the clamorous crowded shore—

Never again, for :

To me the straiter prison,  
 To me the heavier chain—  
 To me Diego Valdez,  
 High Admiral of Spain !

*Sorrow and Grief*

Sorrow and grief are not unnaturally among the poet's chief stock, in that they are so universal and lend themselves to expression in beautiful thoughts. To those men who have been through the sad gates of widowerhood, and then have felt kindly time balm over the outer wound, *The Widower* comes with a fierce grip of realization and, perhaps, some unneeded feeling of compunction if the empty place has been filled.

For a season this pain must endure—  
For a little, little while  
I shall sigh more often than smile,  
Till Time shall work me a cure,  
And the pitiful days beguile.

And Kipling happily had not been through those gates himself, but how sure is his touch on the women's heart—that possessive heart which endures for ever! Perhaps he is hard on the man and the second wife:

But I shall not understand—  
Being set on some later love,  
Shall not know her for whom I strove,  
Till she reach me forth her hand,  
Saying "Who but I have the right?"  
And out of a troubled night  
Shall draw me safe to the land.

The *Mary Gloster* touches the very heart of the same sentiment when the old shipowner tells his sixpenny son to take him out in the old ship and sink him at sea where his wife had died.

By the little Paternosters, as you come to the Union Bank,  
We dropped her . . . I think I told you . . . and I pricked  
it off where she sank. . . .

I believe in the Resurrection, if I read my Bible plain,  
But I wouldn't trust 'em at Wokin'; we're safer at sea again.  
For the heart it shall go with the treasure—go down to the sea  
in ships.

I'm sick of the hired women—I'll kiss my girl on her lips!  
I'll be content with my fountain, I'll drink from my own  
well,

And the wife of my youth shall charm me—an' the rest can go  
to Hell.

The old friend Mac is to take her out in ballast and to pay the son—so little does his father trust him—a large sum down when it is over. The old man dwells hopefully on the sinking:

Down by the head an' sinkin', her fires are drawn and cold,  
And the water's splashin' hollow on the skin of the empty  
hold.

And Sir Anthony goes,

Lashed in our old deck-cabin with all three portholes wide,  
The kick of the screw beneath him, and the round blue seas outside!

. . . I'll lie in our standin' bed.

And that was the rhyme of the *Mary Gloster*.

### *Nostalgia*

Nostalgia, as is sorrow, is among the poet's best subjects, and Kipling's reaction thereto is very live. It is the most bitter and keen of sensations, from the real physical sickness that overcomes youth to that deep longing for other times and other climes which scents and winds bring to man or woman. In its keenest it lies in sorrow for a life misspent, or one that, at any rate, has failed to come up to hopes and ambitions, or—still sadder—for the golden-haired child that has thrown his life away.

It is allied to that feeling of which someone else has written :

To the boy at the high room window  
Gazing alone and apart,  
There came a wish without reason,  
A thought that shone through his heart.

I'll choose this moment and keep it,  
He said to himself for a vow,  
To remember for ever and ever  
As if it were always now.

We have the pure home-sickness at its simplest in *Christmas in India*. I who remember my first Christmas in India—every moment of its sadness in the dusty, hot day in the Deccan—knew it so well, only made bearable as far as Christmas-time went by a white mist in the early morn; and those were the days when *burra tiffins* were still in fashion, which made it worse. You remember how the ode begins . . . and it was written in the days when the critics tell you battle and adultery were Kipling's only stock-in-trade.

Dim dawn behind the tamarisks . . . the sky is saffron  
yellow . . .

As the women in the village grind the corn,  
And the parrots seek the river-side, each calling to his fellow  
That the Day, the staring Eastern day, is born.

Instead of the English smell of Sunday morning, as Chesterton would have said, there was the dust in the highway, and the stench in the byway.

And at Home they're making merry 'neath the white and  
scarlet berry . . .

What part have India's exiles in their mirth ?

Though, as a matter of fact, it is not so bad as that, and thoughtful Indian friends and traders, if you live in the north, will see you have holly and even mistletoe from the Himalaya.

Call a truce, then, to our labours . . . let us feast with friends  
and neighbours,  
And be merry as the custom of our caste ;  
For, if "faint and forced the laughter" and if sadness follow  
after,  
We are richer by one mocking Christmas past.

Scents and smells and soft winds bring back memories to all the world, and I never smell burnt grass without being transported to a scene in a Burman jungle where the sniders squib, and the Boh lays dead in the reeds, and I stand binding up a musket-ball wound in my arm ; and I never feel a soft west wind that does not make me ache for memory of old friends and a certain fair maid. Kipling brings this to us often. There is the Australian trooper who is smitten with the "smell of the wattle at Lichtenberg, riding in the rain", where "smells are surer than sounds or sights to make your heart-strings crack". In *Kim* he says that the "smell of marigold and jasmine was stronger even than the reek of dust", and the irony is that we longed in India for the sights and scents of Home, and here in England, where we pray for the King and not the Viceroy, we ache for the smell of India, the scent of the deodars in the hot sunlight, and the *champak* by the temples. Ay: and even the smell of coconut-oil and sandal-wood that is the aroma of Black Velvet, a sentiment that reaches its height when true Thomas of the Line sighs for a "neater sweeter maiden in a cleaner greener land".

Anent their scent and smell, how about this from *The Broken Men* ?

Day long the diamond weather,  
The high unaltered blue—  
The smell of goats and incense  
And the mule-bells tinkling through.

That is the sight and scent of the high Himalaya and the road to Tibet, though Kipling wrote it of other lands. How does it end ?

Ah God ! One sniff of England—  
To greet our flesh and blood—  
To hear the traffic slurring  
Once more through London mud !<sup>1</sup>  
Our towns of wasted honour—  
Our streets of lost delight !  
How stands the old Lord Warden ?  
Are Dover's cliffs still white ?

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<sup>1</sup> Now no more!

There were days when every exile had his banjo, and the verb was conjugated banjo, banjas, banjat, etc., to banjant, from London Town to Timbuctoo.

In the silence of the herder's hut alone—  
In the twilight on a bucket upside down.  
Here me babble what the weakest won't confess—  
I am Memory and Torment—I am Town !  
I'm all that ever went with evening dress !

But how did Kipling, whose life has been so largely sheltered, know that and say it so exactly, when so far away as 1894 he wrote *The Song of the Banjo* ? Or what did he know of gentlemen rankers, or, for the matter of that, all the other things of which he gets to the heart and the tears ?

When I was working for the Army many a year ago there were three or four sons to every house, and the schools did not trouble to earn their fees and make 'em learn, as some even still neglect to do. For every one who passed for Sandhurst or Woolwich, or got through the "Milish", there were a dozen who did not, and went the world around with their banjos, seeking bread while their girls married the village doc and the curate. *The Song of the Banjo* aforesaid is their story, and the harder stuff tried the ranks, when the rank and file were very different men to live with than now. *Gentlemen Rankers* is the song not of the Boyds and the Peytons (the Luke O'Connors, the Hector MacDonalds and the William Robertsons were genuinely of the ranks), but of those who never got further, perhaps, than the corporal's stripe, and soon lost that, content to rule in the kitchen and drink small beer, to the sad, bitter, and undeserved end. Of such was "Love o' Woman" that could quote Shakespeare, "I'm dying, Egypt . . . dying."

Yes, it makes you cock-a-hoop, to be "Rider" to your troop,  
And branded with a blasted worsted spur,  
When you envy, O how keenly, one poor Tommy being cleanly,  
Who blacks your boots and sometimes calls you "Sir".

They were days, too, when the ex-soldier found life very hard and could not take up his place in civil life. The Army did not want him, they wanted reservists, and hunger drove him to re-enlist under a false attestation at which the recruiting-sergeant often winked an eye. To each verse there is the refrain of habit :

Back to the Army again, sergeant,  
Back to the Army again ;  
'Ow did I learn to do right about turn ?  
I'm back to the Army again !



*Poor Broken Men*

The broken men of all kinds Kipling feels for and understands. If you poke your noses into the corners of India now and again you will still come across the broken officer, broken for the things that make him outcast for ever. Kipling did so, and he wrote *Giffen's Debt*, and he sang a story of a stirring come-back.

*Imprimis*, he was "broke". Thereafter left  
His regiment and, later, took to drink ;  
Then, having lost the balance of his friends,  
"Went Fantee", joined the people of the land,  
Turned three parts Mussulman and one Hindu  
And lived among the Gauri villagers.

. . . . .  
You know they dammed the Gauri with a dam,  
And all the good contractors scamped their work . . .  
. . . Then the Gauri burst.  
We found him dead, beneath an old dead horse,  
Full six miles down the valley.  
He was a victim to the Demon Drink.

The folk of the valley knew better, and cherished the legend of an incarnation of the local god on a great neighing horse that had descended on them and driven them to salvation.

Breathing ambrosia, to the villages  
And fell upon the simple villagers.

. . . . .  
And smote them with the flail-like whip, and drove  
Them clamorous with terror up the hill.

. . . . .  
And mounted on his monster-neighing steed,  
Went down the valley with the flying trees  
And residue of homesteads, while they watched  
Safe on the mountain-side. . . .

Wherefore . . .  
They raised a temple to the local God.

. . . . .  
So he, the whiskified Objectionable,  
Unclean, abominable, out-at-heels,  
Became the Tutelary Deity  
Of all the Gauri villages . . .  
And may in time become a Solar Myth.

And that is a story of pathos and glory and kindly memory in very satisfying blank verse, a better claim to immortality than Mr. Hayward's, who was hanged on Haywards Heath, or Mr. Burgess's, who paid the penalty on Burgess Hill !

*The Lost Legion* has much the same kernel as *Gentlemen Rankers* and *The Song of the Banjo*, and the last hours of such who cry, "I'm dying, Egypt." It was written in 1895, when Lobengula was still a name to conjure with, and the men who had failed in their homes were pioneering in Africa with Westly Richards and Martini Henry—something far stouter than remittance-men.

We've painted the Islands Vermilion,  
We've pearled on half-shares in the Bay,  
We've shouted on seven-ounce nuggets,  
We've starved on a Secdeeboy's pay ;  
We've laughed at the world as we found it—  
Its women and cities and men—  
From Sayyid Burgash in a tantrum,  
To the smoke-reddened eyes of Loben (Dear boys !)  
We've a little account with Loben.

. . . . .

We were first when the trouble began,  
From a lottery-row in Manila  
To an I.D.B.<sup>1</sup> race on the Pan (Dear boys !)  
With the Mounted Police on the Pan.

. . . . .

And . . .  
We preach in advance of the Army,  
We skirmish ahead of the Church.

. . . Until it ringeth to evensong and the lonely grave.

Once upon a time before even the Boer War it broke on the English public that certain of those who took charge of the Light Brigade were down and out in their old age. It was not such a slur on England as it seemed, for three years' service in the Crimea forty years ago did not of necessity give a claim on the public—at any rate, till they were told about it. Told about it they were, with happy result. This is how Kipling tells it :

Keen were the Russian sabres, but want was keener than  
they,  
And an old troop sergeant muttered, "Let us go to the man  
who writes  
The things on Balaclava the kiddies at school recites."

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<sup>1</sup> Illicit Diamond Buying, at one time *the* unforgivable sin.

And so they went :

"You wrote we were heroes once, sir. Please write we are starving now."

The poor little army<sup>1</sup> departed, limping and lean and forlorn  
And the heart of the master-singer grew hot with "the scorn of scorn".

He wrote for them wonderful verses that swept the land like flame,

Till the fatted souls of the English were scourged with the thing called *shame*.

### *His Psychic Stories*

As was to be expected from so widely ranging a pen and explorer, psychic matters often enter into Kipling's writings, or rather he expounds and tells of some psychic phenomenon or story that has come within his ken. Many fiction-writers naturally do the same, but we have never accepted Kipling as a fiction-writer so much as a photographer, interpreter, and expounder by various method of the world's lessons or problems. But you must remember that all conjurers have their own stock tricks by which they throw their magic into relief. Having discovered your card, they don't show it you but throw the pack on the wall so that yours sticks to a projecting nail. Now and again does Kipling produce his psychic effects in this manner, and, as said, it stands the supreme test of all, in that the roots of your hair shiver and run cold. When Kipling does explain some story with a psychic intent, he does so, as in all his other subjects, with knowledge. In the language of the military costumist, he would not give a Victorian cuff and lapel to a Georgian coatee—metaphorical fault of so many.

Sometimes the psychic effect comes to the sense of vision, at other times to that of hearing. In *The Phantom Rickshaw* there is the double record of the emanation—Jack Pansay both sees and hears Agnes Wessington. There is *The Lost Legion* already referred to, and you shiver as you hear the horses' hooves and the clashing scabbards of the phantom regiment climbing with the British horsemen up that stony frontier *ragza* past the watchers' towers. For the obsession of a presence, there is *The House Surgeon* among his later stories, discussed elsewhere. In *The Return of Imray* we have the often-recorded knowledge of the presence of the unburied corpse, whose spirit seemingly calls to you to take action. Kipling deals with them all on accepted lines of observation.

A few years ago a French doctor-savant wrote of his experiments to prove that a spirit had weight, weighing his

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<sup>1</sup>Twenty souls.

dying patients at the moment of dissolution—even his own dying wife—on a specially sensitive scale bed. He even photographed his wife's evanescent spirit as it slowly wound out of the body. Because in the past folk believed that the spirit went slowly comes the old custom of watching by the dead a while to let the spirit go in peace. Very few who study the Resurrection realize how an Eastern corpse is wrapped—the body-cloth across the chest, the neck and face uncovered, the brow bound with a napkin, and as the body and spirit together in His case "evanesced", the clothes would collapse and lay neatly folded, the head-napkin apart on the slab. The gospels shout this at you, and yet few realize the intense accuracy of the account.

These are the things that Kipling knows as he deals with the psychic. In *The Return of Imray* Kipling describes the presence: "a fluttering, whispering, bolt-fumbling, lurking loitering Someone"; and then must he also describe how Tietjens will not remain in the house after dark, showing that well-known perception of the unseen with which dogs and equines (*cf.* Balaam's ass) seem to be especially endowed.

"Tietjens made the twilight more interesting by glaring into the darkened rooms with every hair erect, and following the motions of something that I could not see. She never entered the rooms, but her eyes moved interestedly. . . ."

In *The Dog Hervey*, referred to for its Masonic implications elsewhere, he is entirely "orthodox" in his rendering of the obsession; that is to say, it does not run counter to observed phenomena. By so much would Kipling earn the approval of psychic society and research. He does not toy with the subject to earn the applause of the uninstructed. Indeed, as with all his work, it is really addressed to those who know. Those who don't may enjoy and may join in the groans, or lead the cheers, but they don't matter. In a paper recently read to the Kipling Society, Miss Winifred Sewell refers to the story *At the End of the Passage*, and speaks of the death of Hummil, who had gone to bed on a spur lest he fall asleep, but at last did so and died of fright; it was a blind, weeping face that haunted him. Spurstow sees something in the dead man's eyes and has taken a photo. The Doctor, surprised, develops it, and is heard breaking up the camera in the dark-room. He emerges very white indeed, swearing that there was nothing, and that he had torn up the films.

"There was nothing there. It was impossible."

"That," said Lowndes, very distinctly, watching the shaking hand striving to relight the pipe, "is a damned lie."

Miss Sewell remarks, "Now for the proof that Kipling was not romancing. His tale was published in 1889. On December 8, 1924, I found this account of a rather similar phenomenon.

"Extraordinary proof of the guilt of Angerstein has been provided by a photograph of the eyes of his victim. The eyes of the murdered man were wide open and the photographs of them which were taken showed a picture of the murderer with an axe in his hand impressed on the retina.' "

The source of this extract does not appear, and she acknowledges that a murder of flesh and blood is different from the apparition that frightened Hummil so, but sees no divergence in principle. She is right, insomuch that it shows how Kipling was working again within the framework of a possible and accepted phenomenon.

*They*—the beautiful, not quite intelligible, *They*—is mystical enough, and Kipling both sees and hears the ghost children, and feels his own dead daughter kiss the palm of his hand hanging limp over the chair, as was her wont in life, and he even brings in the matter of aura.

In *Kim* there is a different trend, and we have the mysticism of the *lama*, while to Kim himself is given that moment of mystery when he seems to mingle his destiny and being with the infinite.

The mystic references and stories will be found here and there, dotted about much of his work, always congruous to recognized thought.

### Tragedy

There are few verses of sorrow and sympathy from the pen of the man who "did not understand women" more forceful than *Mary Pity Women!* in *Barrack-Room Ballads*, written in the vein of *Badalia Herodsfoot* :

You call yourself a man,  
For all you used to swear,  
An' leave me as you can,  
My certain shame to bear?  
I 'ear You do not care!—  
You done the worst you know  
I 'ate you, grinnin' there . . .  
Ah, Gawd, I love you so!

And the bitter commentary :

When a man is tired, there is naught will bind 'im;  
All 'e solemn promised 'e will shove be'ind 'im.  
What's the good o' prayin' for the Wrath to strike 'im  
(Mary pity women!) when the rest are like 'im?

*The Liner She's a Lady*, the song of the little baggage hanging round the Hard, strikes even a crueller note of sadness, and it also has that usual gift of prophecy, the hint of the inwardness of the World War. It begins :

The Liner she's a lady, an' she never looks nor 'eeds—  
The Man-o'-War's 'er 'usband, an' 'e gives 'er all she needs ;  
But, oh, the little cargo-boats, that sail the wet seas roun'  
They're just the same as you an' me, a-plyin' up an' down !

And then the pathos in it all :

*Plyin' up an' down, Jenny, 'angin round the Yard,  
All the way by Fratton tram down to Portsmouth 'Ard ;  
Anythin' for business, an' we're growing old—  
Plyin' up an' down, Jenny, waitin' in the cold !*

Then this prophetic verse :

The Liner she's a lady, and if a war should come,  
The Man-o'-War's 'er 'usband, an' 'e'd bid 'er stay at home ,  
But, oh, the little cargo-boats, that fill with every tide !  
'E'd 'ave to up an' fight for them, for they are England's  
Pride.

So the pathos contains the allegory of the shipping that twenty years ago we knew so well, and the moral of *Jenny* is but secondary, though its sadness is incalculable.

*All the way by Fratton tram down to Portsmouth 'Ard.*

The sharpness of the allegory will be still more deeply understood by those who have been told to "cruise about till morning", as the swept Channel was closed, at Alex or Bombay.

### *Extravaganza*

The greater bulk of Kipling's stories and verse deal with the life of men and women from their rising to their down-setting, in many and unusual situations often enough, and with an ingenuity of insight that is both intriguing and baffling ; but they are, for the most part, stories of the centre. But because of his conscious humour it pleases him at times to indulge in the whole gamut of description and sensation, and he will strike wild or joyous chords at both ends of the keyboard. He will indulge in extravaganza beyond limit, and in the macabre till one is sick with horror.

Three of his extravaganza are inimitable, among several lesser samples, and they are *Brugglesmith*,<sup>1</sup> *The Village that Voted the Earth was Flat* <sup>2</sup>—earth was flat, earth was flat—and then,

<sup>1</sup>*Many Inventions.*    <sup>2</sup>*A Diversity of Creatures.*

in the last of his public collections—*Limits and Renewals*—the thrice-confounding farce of *Aunt Ellen*, or *The Bull that Thought*.<sup>1</sup>

Let us see, if we can, how the joy of disporting comes. Brugglesmith, you will remember, is but short for Brook Green, Hammersmith. The teller of the story—Kipling himself—was dining on board the *Breslau* lying below London Bridge, with his friend M'Phee, the chief engineer. M'Phee has a friend on board, an old friend of his apprentice days, deeply Scot and addicted to schnapps, or its Scottish equivalent. They eventually quit the ship in charge of a lascar. The drunk insists on steering, and they are taken to shore, after many lesser adventures, by the police-boat. The drunk explains to the police in increasing Doric :

“ ‘It’s a vara drunken man broke loose,’ roared my companion, ‘and I’m taking him home by water, for he cannot stand on dry land.’ Here he shouted my name twenty times running, and I could feel the blushes racing over my body three deep.”

Many adventures end with the teller, it will be remembered, having got the drunk at last strapped into an ambulance, wheeling him on the advice of a friendly constable to Charing Cross Hospital. The voice from the ambulance, a wheedling voice, says :

“ ‘Laddie, ye’ve misca’ed me shameful names, but I’m o’er old to go to a hospital. Dinna desert me, laddie. Tak me home to my wife.”

And the officer chips in, “ ‘He’s none so bad. ’Is wife’ll comb ’is hair for ’im proper.”

So the teller decides to take him to his home in Brugglesmith, which the officer has translated. Through the silent, early hours the ambulance is pushed past the Albert Hall and down the High Street, while he of the ambulance whimpers for a drink. At Brook Green he indicates his house as one that is to let.

He breaks down.

“ ‘Olely lil while,’ he sobbed. ‘Olely lil while. Home falmy . . . best of falmies . . . wife too . . . *you* dole know my wife ! Left them all a lill while ago. Now everything’s sold . . . all sold. Wife . . . falmy . . . all sold. Lemmegellup ! ’ ”

He gets to the bell, is encouraged to pull, to pull harder. “ ‘Qui’ ri’. *I’ll riggle bell.* ’ ”

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<sup>1</sup> *Debits and Credits.*

There were many happenings during that long march through Knightsbridge and Shepherd's Bush before he came to "riggle bell" and to clasp the bell-pull that came away as he and the ambulance turned over and wound themselves up in the yards and yards that issued from that house interior, the kitchen woodwork knocking its protest.

"Laddie," he gasped, his speech returning, "have I a legal remedy?"

"I will go and look for one."

He was finally borne off by two policemen whom the writer of the story had summoned to stop a man stealing lead; but what puzzled them most was how the St. Clement Dane's ambulance got to Brook Green, Hammersmith.

Perhaps *The Village that Voted the Earth was Flat* is even more complete as fun, and the vengeance on an officious Bench for treating early motorists as criminals has not been surpassed in all the world as the score complete—the Gubby dancers at a village fête, the marshalling of the Press, humorous and otherwise, among the avengers—the encompassing of music stars and impresarios, and the singing of the village that voted the earth was flat, to *Nuts in May* with variations! But when the rag moved to the House of Commons, the Irish Members—yes, that was in the good days when the Irish were kept to hand—took it up. Never has extravaganza risen so high.

*Aunt Ellen* is such pure fun and mischief that it must be read by all who have missed that joy, while *The Bull that Thought* has carried fun to a dignity that is a thing apart. It has been dealt with in some sort in the chapter on "Later Work" (XVIII), and also in that dealing with Kipling and France (XV); but to treat of Kipling's extravaganza without referring to it here would be to draw the late Mr. Euclid from his grave at the absurdity.

Humour is another matter from extravaganza, even if allied; but humour, subtle humour, especially the inner humour of His Majesty's Services, civil as well as military (the term is used in its wider sense), pokes its head up from among more than half the prose and some good portion of the verse.



## CHAPTER XIII

### DOGS AND BEASTS AND CHILDREN

Dogs—Teem and the Vicomte Bouvier de Brie—Concerning Children—The Jungle Books.

#### *Dogs*

THOSE who like to take their Kipling simply and free of guile turn most, perhaps, to his animal stories, his jungle tales and *Mowgli*, or to his *Just So Stories*, for small and grown-up children. But it is with the dog that he excels and touches hearts with glory—dog stories and songs for those who really love and understand the dog world. There is *Garm, a Hostage*, that is in appearance one of the Musketeer stories dug out from a box to appear in a later collection. It comes in *Actions and Reactions*, and the story is of Ortheris and his bull-terrier left in Lahore with Kipling by his master, as a penance to mortify his—Private Ortheris'—spirit. It is a real dog story, and there are a lot of other nice things therein, notably the *tonga*-drive with galloping ponies to Simla, with the old red-bearded driver blowing his battered bugle at the corners or to warn the grooms to bring out the relay. Ah ! . . . And if there is also the memory of a skirt to be waiting among the deodars by the *tonga*-stand . . . ! And after *Garm* in the book comes that wonderful ballad *The Power of the Dog*, with the refrain "giving your heart to a dog to tear":

There is sorrow enough in the natural way  
From men and women to fill our day ;  
But when we are certain of sorrow in store,  
Why do we always arrange for more ?  
*Brothers and sisters I bid you beware*  
*Of giving your heart to a dog to tear.*

Buy a pup and your money will buy  
Love unflinching that cannot lie. . . .

. . . . .

*Nevertheless, it is hardly fair*  
*To risk your heart for a dog to tear.*

It is another form of *The White Man's Burden* (*Radio Times* please note).

But among the later ballads, too well known even to quote

from, is the *Supplication of the Black Aberdeen*, which touches the tears of things to perfection.

In *Limits and Renewals* is the delightful story of *The Woman in His Life*. John Marden, shaken by the War, has made a fortune, but his partner has died, and he works too hard for his nerves, and has also taken to schnapps. His former batman, now his valet, finding him haunted by visions of a black dog that lurks in the corners of his room, introduces a five-months-old prize Aberdeen bitch. Dinah soon takes control, feminine to the tips of her black paws, and brings him back from the pit, the wisdom of Shingle the semi-rogue batman assisting. There is a fine scene when Marden, who has done lots of desperate tunnelling under the Messine Ridge, digs her out from a deep warren and fox-lair, where a root has fastened in her collar—a long, desperate and sweaty business. Most of Kipling's later stories touch relics and memories of the Great War. When Marden comes back from the burrow, his clothes in rags, and has his bath in the copper, Shingle's sister, with whom they are lodging in the country, remarks to her brother, "An' 'e done it for 'is dog, what wouldn't 'e do for 'is woman?"

"Yes, *you* would take it that way. *I'm* thinking about 'im." But Dinah and the burrow have cured him, and Marden shouts to go back to work. Oh, a yarn of great charm and merit ! The *envoi* is *Four-feet*, which few have read :

I have done mostly what most men do,  
And pushed it out of my mind ;  
But I can't forget, if I wanted to,  
Four-feet trotting behind.

But Four-feet cannot live for ever, no more than the woman of your heart.

Now I must go by some other round—  
Which I shall never find—  
Somewhere that does not carry the sound  
Of Four-feet trotting behind.

The drama of the dead dog, however, is more fully expressed in the prelude to *The Woman in His Life* :

She did not know that she was dead,  
But, when the pang was o'er,  
Sat down to wait her Master's tread  
Upon the Golden Floor.

With ears full-cock and anxious eyes,  
Impatiently resigned ;  
But ignorant that Paradise  
Did not admit her kind.

Sudden far down the Bridge of Ghosts  
That anxious spirits clomb—  
She caught that step in all the hosts,  
And knew that he had come.

There spoke a Spirit out of the press  
Said :—"Have you any here  
That saved a fool from drunkenness,  
And a coward from his fear ?"

And Peter bade him enter and look, but feared that from  
what he knew of men, women and men,

Your riddle is hard to read.

Then flew Dinah from under the Chair  
Into his arms she flew—  
And licked his face from chin to hair  
And Peter passed them through !

These have all appeared in 1934 in *Collected Dog Stories*, save only *Teem*, the newest of all. Listen now to some outline of the story of the Vicomte Bouvier de Brie and his truffle-hunting pal.

### *Teem and the Vicomte Bouvier de Brie*

In January 1936 there appeared in the *Strand Magazine* perhaps almost the last of the new Kipling stories which saw the light of day, one of those modern dog interpretations for which his later years had been so famous, and of which the *Supplication of the Black Aberdeen* will, perhaps, be the most lasting. "*Teem*", *A Treasure Hunter*, is the story of a French truffle-hunting dog—as told by himself—and is a lasting tribute to Kipling's love for and understanding of France. The way that *Teem* brings the wealth of the truffle to a family to whom they were new and finds comfort for the tuberculous daughter is more than engaging. The high-born dame—"the born one", of breeding, even as is *Teem*, is quite of the Kipling essence—while the champion sheep-dog, *Teem's* friend, the Vicomte Bouvier de Brie, lives like the Bull that Thought for Himself. The verses at the head sing of him :

He is born and bred and made for the cattle-droving track,  
And they call him Monsieur Bouvier de Brie.  
"What, Brie ?" "Yes, Brie." "Where those funny  
Cheeses come from ?" "*Oui ! Oui ! Oui !*"

My friend the Vicomte Bouvier de Brie.

As a result of Teem's truffle-hunting gifts, slowly borne in on the charcoal-burner's untutored mind,

"... the Girl has now a wooden-roofed house of her own—open at one side, and capable of being turned around against winds by his [the charcoal-burner's] strong one hand. Here she arranges the bottles from which she drinks, and here comes—but less and less often—a dry Person of mixed odours, who applies his ear at the end of a stick, to her thin back."

But truffle-hunting was Teem's art, and "outside his art", as the Vicomte Bouvier de Brie had taught him, "an Artist must never dream".

### *Concerning Children*

Of children Kipling has written, and for children, with charm and insight. The *Just So Stories* are delightful nonsense, and it is not only children who enjoy them. *They*, the story of dead children, for memory of his own—*Wee Willie Winkie*, for the story that he heard when he was young—it was only the other day that I stayed on the Plain with a brigadier whose father was a Light Dragoon, and who said to me, "Did you know that *I* was Wee Willie Winkie?" And perhaps it was so, and I who know the border so well, and still long for it, can see the hairy tribesman, and the golden-haired lad—and the way he talked to the wild men, keeping back his tears, is the way that the British rebuilt the broken Turkish Empire of India. You didn't know that India was a Turkish Empire? Perhaps not; yet for close on a thousand years the Kings of Delhi were Turks, including the Mogul—and so were their nobles, their henchmen and many of their troops, Turks of the "Mongol fold" from Turkestan.

*Baa Baa Black Sheep* is as pretty a story of the ancient exile of India as you could wish and weep to read. Punch *baba*, son Punch, is going Home to England—Home across the Black Water to be a man—and the servants who were his slaves are sorrowful. And Punch, aged five, and Judy, aged three, were to go to a family—a woman who took Indian children (and some of such were very wonderful guardians and foster-parents, and some were not), and five-year-old Punch fell to a woman who did not understand children, or cared not to take the trouble. Judy was three and happy. Punch needed a mother. The woman who failed in her duty had an invalid husband and trouble of her own.

"Uncle Harry" had been badly wounded in the *Brisk* at the

hard, long, long ago battle of Navarino, fought before even the days of Queen Victoria. He, "Uncle Harry", slowly fading, was an ally of Punch's—and died singing the Song of Navarino: "And the little *Brisk* was sore exposed." And Punch shouts in excitement outside the death-bed the ending, "That day at Navarino, 'Uncle Harry'," and was scolded therefor. But a friend of the family, a surgeon, comes to see them—finds that Punch has become the Black Sheep, ill-treated and misunderstood, and is going blind from over-reading as his only way of escape. He writes to Mother, who comes home. It all ends so happily after much sadness:

"Punch walks through the ditch and mires himself to the knees. 'Mother, dear,' he shouts, 'I'm just as dirty as I can pos-sib-ly be!'

" 'Then change your clothes as quickly as you po-sib-ly can!' Mother's clear voice rings out from the house. 'And don't be a little *pagal*.' "

" 'There! I told you so,' says Punch. 'It's all different now, and we are just as much Mother's as if she had never gone.' "

But Kipling knows something of child psychology and the ease with which scars are made, for he adds:

"Not altogether, O Punch, for when young lips have drunk deep of the bitter waters of Hate, Suspicion, and Despair, all the Love in the world will not wholly take away that knowledge; though it may turn darkened eyes for a while to the light, and teach faith where no faith was."

Indeed it was Kipling's own story.

And here we might remark with the *Radio Times* once again that there is nothing about the "white man's burden" here.

*His Majesty the King* had a mother who did not bother about him, and left him to a very dull nurse, and disported herself as only married women in India can, and the disgruntled husband was surly. His Majesty's friend, Patsy, the Commissioner's daughter, was idolized by *her* parents, and the Commissioner's wife was sorry for the neglected little son, and finds him in much trouble. She calls on the mother, but finds her heartless and she gets no opening. But ere long His Majesty finds a diamond star and a note for his mother and hides it. And *she* did not keep an assignation and saved her soul. As the King lay in fever, it is found. Husband and wife come together again, and their world—His Majesty's world—becomes human.

Not long after he trots over to Patsy, and the Commissioner's wife would have kissed him.

"'No, not vere,' says His Majesty the King, with superb insolence, fencing one corner of his mouth with his hand.

"'Vat's my Mamma's place—vere *she* kisses me.'"

The Commissioner's wife is both hurt and glad. The last story in the *Wee Willie Winkie* group is that *Drums of the Fore and Aft*, already often quoted, yet listen—one passage from the story of these two Band boys—their regiment is ordered to the wars—the Band will go, but not the boys. Lew and Jakin beard their Colonel, who eventually says they may go.

"Jakin and Lew entered the boys' barrack-room with great stateliness, and refused to hold any conversation with their comrades for at least ten minutes. Then bursting with pride Jakin drawled :

"'I've bin intervooving the Colonel. Good old beggar is the Colonel. Says I to 'im, 'Colonel,' says I, 'let me go to the Front along o' the Reg'ment.'" "To the Front you shall go," says 'e, "an' I only wish there was more like you among the dirty little devils that bang the bloomin' drums.'" Kidd, if you throw your 'courtirements at me for tellin' you the truth to your own advantage, your legs'll swell.'"

"'I'm going out to say adoo to my girl,' said Lew, to cap the climax. 'Don't none o' you touch my kit, because it's wanted for active service. . . .'"

If by any chance you don't know the story you will thrill the more to read it—of Jakin and Lew of the *Drums of the Fore and Aft*,

"whose little bodies were borne up just in time to fit two gaps at the head of the big ditch grave for the dead under the heights of Jagai."

*The Story of Muhammad Din*, in *Plain Tales from the Hills*, has been referred to under "India" (Chapter X). It is the sad, sweet story of the small son of the *sahib's* bearer, who craves for an old polo-ball, but slips away from life in the malaria season, and gives us a heart-tug thereby.

Indeed, in and about all his stories—besides those special ones that are children's stories—are many little bits and pieces that show how dear to him were the small folk of the world.

*The Jungle Books*

Love of animals, imagination about animals, the placing of anthropomorphic words in their mouths, is the prevailing whim of the English, and *The Jungle Books*, for that reason, have brought joy and enthusiasm to many a heart—Mowgli, the wolf-child—and wolf-reared children are true things—Baloo, and Bagheera and Kaa are not only household words in our nurseries and school-rooms—they are the wisdom of the ages and the pleasure of the hour in the studies and boudoirs of the parents. Rikki-tikki-Tavi is supreme in the hearts of our old ladies. *Toomai of the Elephants* is sheer Kheddah lore. A great mastering of the wild forest and its fauna, of the aboriginal folk whom Jan Chinn controlled, is herein displayed, a lore before which the scientist will bow down.

The stories in *The Jungle Books* are nearly all of Mowgli, the Indian child brought up like Romulus and Remus in a wolf's lair, and of his brotherhood with all the jungle. The story of such children in India is not unknown. Reports come through ; sometimes the census reports bring something of the sort, and paragraphs concerning such may be found in the Indian Press. Mowgli's foster-brothers are four wolf-cubs, who became his familiar spirits as he grows up.

There are a few stories of seals and seal life, and one, the *Miracle of Puran Bhagat*, has but crept in to make up the length; it belongs to the chapter on "India".

*Servants of the Queen*, also, is a story outside the jungle—of a camp stampeded by frightened camels and Army animals. Troop-horses, gun-mules, artillery-bullocks, and camels tell and talk of their thoughts and troubles.

Hark to the troop-animals :

" 'My lords,' said the camel humbly, 'we dreamed bad dreams in the night, and we were very much afraid. I am only a baggage-camel of the 39th Native Infantry, and I am not as brave as you are, my lords.'

" 'Then why the pickets didn't you stay and carry baggage for the 39th Native Infantry, instead of running all round the camp ?' said the mule.

" 'They were such very bad dreams,' said the camel. 'I am sorry. Listen ! What is that ? Shall we run on again ?'

" 'Sit down,' said the mule, 'or you'll snap your long legs between the guns.' He cocked one ear and listened. 'Bullocks !' he said, 'gun-bullocks. On my word, you and your friends have waked the camp very thoroughly. It takes a good deal of prodding to put up a gun-bullock.' "

*Toomai of the Elephants* is also outside the Mowgli series, though assuredly part of a jungle book and perhaps the most charming of all.

Mowgli is beloved of all beasts, and he is taught the Word of Fear that brings peace with all.

*Kaa's Huntings* tells of Mowgli's being carried off to a ruined deserted Rajput city by the feckless, thriftless monkeys the *Bandar-log*, and how Kaa, the great python, and Bagheera and Baloo fight fiercely to rescue him. But before he is carried off, he has been associating with the monkeys. Baloo scolds him :

"*'Whoof !'* Baloo's big paw scooped Mowgli off Bagheera's back, and as the boy lay between the big fore-paws he could see the Bear was angry.

"*'Mowgli,'* said Baloo, 'thou hast been talking with the *Bandar-log*—the Monkey People.'

"Mowgli looked at Bagheera to see if the Panther was angry too, and Bagheera's eyes were as hard as jade-stones.

"*'Thou hast been with the Monkey People—the grey apes—the people without a Law—the eaters of everything. That is a great shame.'*

"*'When Baloo hurt my head [Baloo had had to chastize him before], I went away, and the grey apes came down from the trees and had pity on me. No one else cared.'* He snuffled a little.

"*'The pity of the Monkey People !'* Baloo snorted. 'The stillness of the mountain stream ! The cool of the summer sun ! And then, man cub ?'

"*'And then, and then, they gave me nuts and pleasant things to eat, and they—they carried me in their arms up to the top of the trees and said I was their blood-brother, except that I had no tail, and should be their leader some day.'*

"*'They have no leader,'* said Bagheera. 'They lie. They have always lied.' "

And Baloo scolded Mowgli very severely for keeping bad and dangerous company.

*How Fear Came* is a real story of a real drama, a summer of great drought and heat, all the streams dry, water-pools shallow, wild yams shrunk to nothing. The "Water Truce" was tactfully proclaimed, when no beast killed its victim by the water.

"The deer and pig had tramped all day in search of something better than dried bark and withered leaves. The buffaloes had found no wallows to be cool in, and no green crops to steal. The snakes had left the jungle and



come down to the river in the hope of finding a stray frog. They curled round wet stones, and never offered to strike when the snout of a rooting pig dislodged them. The river-turtles had long ago been killed by Bagheera, cleverest of hunters, and the fish had buried themselves deep in the dry mud. Only the Peace Rock lay across the shallows like a long snake, and the little tired ripples hissed as they dried on its hot side."

Here Mowgli met all the animals, dishevelled, thin and worn. . . . "The men folk, too, they die beside their ploughs," said a young sambur. "I passed three between sunset and night. . . ."

Then came Shere Khan the lame tiger, and shocked all by saying that he had killed a man "for choice", and the wild elephant orders him to drink and be gone. It was ill done. Shere Khan had said it was his by "right", and as he slinks away the elephant tells the weird story *How Fear Came*—when in the beginning the tiger killed a buck in anger. It was the first death in the jungle, and fear came.

Then you hear how, as Mowgli grew, his beast friends advised him to return to man—he went and lived with a woman who had lost her child in the jungle and vowed Mowgli was he. How the villagers tried to murder his new-found parents for having a witch-child, and the vengeance which Mowgli got his friends to take, and how they "let in the jungle" is told with much force in the story of that name. But the most stirring and blood-curdling story is *Red Dog*, when a great hunting-pack of the "dhole" comes north from the Deccan, and the Sone wolf-pack puts up a desperate fight against them. The wild dogs are more powerful than the wolves and several times more numerous, but Mowgli provokes them to chase him by scoffing at the "hair between the toes"—a low-bred sign—and leads them over the wild bees' nests. If ever you see wild bees aroused in India at the Marble Rocks, you will know what that means.

But boys must grow to men, and then comes the call to their own—and one day the call went forth in the jungle: "The Master of the Jungle goes back to man", and Mowgli found his parents again. Is it not told in *The Spring Running*? And the *Second Jungle Book* ends, saying, "... and this is the last of the Mowgli stories"—which it wasn't, for the end of the story of Mowgli is not told in the *First* or *Second Jungle Book*, but in *In the Rukh*.<sup>1</sup> It is the story of Mowgli and Gisborne the

<sup>1</sup> *Many Inventions.*

forest officer, and that wonderful German who was so long the organizer of the amazing Indian Forest Service, whom Kipling refers to as Müller; but that was not his name. Mowgli falls in with Gisborne and astounds him, naturally enough, with his jungle power and knowledge, and brings a great nilghai bull, the head of the herd, up to the forest bungalow by the help of his four wolf brethren.

They chance on Müller, who knows and understands and feels for the marks on elbow and knee where Mowgli walked like a wolf-cub before he could stand. They make Mowgli a forest ranger, and he marries the thirteen-year-old daughter of Gisborne's Moslem bearer. There is a heap of lore in this farewell tale too. Of the Forest Department, Kipling writes herein :

"Its servants wrestle with the wandering sand torrents and shifting dunes : wattling them at the sides, damming them in front, and pegging them down atop with coarse grass and spindling pine after the rules of Nancy.<sup>1</sup> They are responsible for all the timber in the State forests of the Himalayas, as well as for the denuded hillsides that the monsoons wash into dry gullies and aching ravines ; each cut a mouth, crying aloud what carelessness can do. They experiment with battalions of foreign trees, and coax the blue gum to take root, and perhaps dry up the Canal fever. . . . They poll and lop for the stacked railway-fuel along the lines that burn no coal ; they calculate the profit of their plantations to five points of decimals ; they are the doctors and midwives of the huge teak forests of Upper Burma, the rubber of the Eastern Jungle, and the gall-nuts of the South ; and they are always hampered by a lack of funds. . . . The forest officer . . . spends much time in saddle or under canvas . . . till the woods that show his care in turn set their mark on him, and he ceases to sing the naughty French songs he learnt at Nancy, and grows silent with the silent things of the underbrush."

And the stories of *The Jungle Books* are the inner lore of the Indian forest and its denizens. There is now and again, too, some touch of the past ; the elephant had seen the blood of the fields of Bhurtpore, and the drama of the Mutiny is referred to.

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• <sup>1</sup> French Forest School.

## CHAPTER XIV

### KIPLING AND THIS ENGLAND

Kipling and Sussex—*Puck of Pook's Hill*—Britain and Rome—England through the Ages—Sussex and Saxon—*Dymchurch Flit*—Queen Bess and King George

#### *Kipling and Sussex*

IN open refutation of the lesser critics of that peculiar grade who use the word "jingo" of any national thought, Kipling set himself to sing and tell the beauty of England and the deep romance of her early story. That intense interest in our past which is now popular among all classes has much of its origin in the inspired glamour of *Puck of Pook's Hill* and *Rewards and Fairies*. Old admirals would not be superintending beviacs of amateur archaeologists, mostly girls, spending their holidays excavating in summer camps by castle and 'bury were it not that the said girls had won those books as school prizes. Hadrian's Wall now yearly yields proof of all that Puck showed of Parnesius the centurion.

To understand Sussex, one dominant, but by no means paramount, feature must be understood—that of the chalk—the South Downs. Upon these Downs the earliest inhabitants had their homes after the passing of the second ice-cap. Palaeolithic man and his remains are yet beyond our comprehension; Neolithic man is slowly coming into the limelight from pre-history into history.

The antiquity of the remnants on the Downs is staggering; before Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees to be a *Habiru*, there were the long barrows of the Early Bronze on Windover Hill; and neolithic man was on the Downs before the Bronze. Kipling's first story, in point of days, is set for us on the Downs above the Weald and the jungles where the wolves reigned, and the spirit of the Downs and his reverence for them are shown in what is almost a nursery rhyme:

*The Weald is good, the Downs are best—  
I'll give you the run of 'em East to West,  
Beachy Head and Windoor Hill  
They were once and they are still.*

. . . Matters that then he could only have known of by induction and intuition. But glorious and searching and in-

spiring as are the stories of old England, from Parnesius to the widow Whitgift, it is by his stories and verse of the heart of Sussex that he has sought out countless human hearts that beat in unison. Sussex verse, and anthologies of such, are numerous, often beautiful and *nearly* satisfying; and then comes Kipling with the magic of the necessary word both in ballad and story, and no one else can live in the same verse-book with him, or story either.

In *The Knife and the Naked Chalk* we learn of the young Flint man who went down from the Downs to live among the Iron Age immigrants on the fortified estuary settlements, and how he learned to make and use iron. Back he came to teach his own folk, and the wolf is now defeated; but—and it is a terrible “but”—just the “but” that Kipling would realize—they make him a god, with all the rewards and dignities, and his own girl marries his friend! A striking story, but perhaps the only one in which there is any sign of a chronological error, made when the different cultures and folks, the Bronze, the Megalithic and the Iron, were not so studied and recognized as in the last few years. The whole of England knew many centuries of bronze before the iron came, and it is the bronze, those beautiful bronze sword-blades and spear-heads of which we have so many specimens, that put the wolf in his place. Had Kipling but written of bronze instead of iron, *The Knife and the Naked Chalk* would have stood for as good interpretation as all his other studies.

### *Puck of Pook's Hill*

To write of this book is but to hammer a well-beaten shoe, to tread a thrice-trod path—but there are people in the world who do not know their Kipling as Britons should, and there are generations to follow who may want to know where to read. So for all its needless redundancy, let us tread the path again. Pook's Hill, as all the world should know, lies not far from Burwash in that almost sacred county in the triangle between Eastbourne, Lewes, and Battle that once was Saint Lache. The network of stories, almost all set in Sussex, are scenes shown to typical children of an English country gentleman—Una and Dan—who are full of undigested tales of Shakespeare and the lays of ancient Rome.

The story opens with the children in the grass hollow they called the “Theatre”, in the meadow known as the “Long Slip”, and in the bend of the stream lay a large old fairy ring of darkened grass which was the stage. There they were acting as much as they could remember of the fairy scene from

*A Midsummer Night's Dream.* They were not, of course, allowed to act on Midsummer Night itself, but they went down after tea on Midsummer Eve, when the shadows were growing. . . .

“. . . A cuckoo sat on a gate-post singing his broken June tune ‘Cuckoo-cuk’, while a busy kingfisher crossed from the mill-stream to the brook which lay on the other side of the meadow. Everything else was a sort of thick, sleepy stillness, smelling of meadow-sweet and dry grass.”

That is the setting of Southern England in June—when there is a June—a right ripe setting for what follows, and a perfect gambit for the appearance of Puck, the showman of the liberties of old England. Now Dan took the parts of Puck, Bottom and the three fairies. Their play went well and neither had forgotten, not even

“the difficult piece where she [Titania] tells the fairies how to feed Bottom with ‘apricocks, ripe figs and dewberries’, and all the lines end in ‘ies’. They were so pleased that they acted it three times over from beginning to end before they sat down in the unthistly centre of the Ring to eat eggs and Bath Olivers.”

Then the bushes part, and where Dan had stood as Puck now stood

“a small, brown, broad-shouldered, pointy-eared person with a snub nose, slanting blue eyes and a grin that ran right across his freckled face.” He asks to their astonishment :

“What hempen homespuns have we swaggering here,  
So near the cradle of our Fairy Queen?”

“‘We did not expect anyone,’ Dan answered slowly. ‘This is our field.’”

“‘Is it?’ said their visitor, sitting down. ‘Then what in Human Earth made you act *Midsummer Night's Dream*, three times over, on Midsummer Eve, in the middle of the Ring, and under . . . right under one of my oldest hills in Old England? Pook's Hill—Puck's Hill . . . Puck's Hill . . . Pook's Hill ! It's as plain as the nose on my face.’”

“He pointed to the bare, fern-covered slope of Pook's Hill that runs up from the far side of the mill-stream to a dark wood. Beyond that wood the ground rises for five hundred feet, till at last you climb up on the bare top of Beacon Hill and look over the Pevensey levels and the Channel and half the naked South Downs.”

And that is how Kipling introduces his showman Puck to tell us all—and especially our children and all the children to come hereafter—of the romance and history of our heritage. And Puck takes a proffered Bath Oliver “sprinkled with salt” to show that he is a good honest sprite that need be ashamed to no man. And now he is to take the children through the story. The earliest story of all—of the Chalk and the man who chipped his flints so cunningly—we do not read till we come to the second saga of the Isles, *Rewards and Fairies*.

Then Puck gives them seisin of Old England with a piece of turf, which after all is but a form of earnest money, and then he gives them the obligation “by Right of Oak and Ash and Thorn”, the trees which *are* the South, and to which with bracken and bramble it would go back if you left her soil alone for only twenty years. They are now magicked sufficiently to see what Puck shall show them, and the first conducted tour is to Willingford Bridge that used to be Weland’s Ford and old Hobden’s ninth great-grandfather, who was Hob of the Dene then ; and he told them all the story of Weland God becoming Wayland-Smith. But they had forgotten it all when they got home, for he had made them chew an Oak, an Ash and a Thorn leaf, the leaves of oblivion.

The next tour is to see the magic of the Norman becoming more English than the English, which is, *mutatis mutandis*, one of the peculiar traits of the British blend, that assimilateness which is like the chameleon. It is a stirring conception and one that within limits must be the right one. Norman and Saxon and Dane were not really far removed in ethnology and character, and the Norman is far different from the Frenchman, though tamed by French culture. Entirely unmindful of Puck, thanks to his magic, the children are playing by the brook that feeds the mill-stream, a passage among long, leafy tunnels.

“Down in the tunnels were bars of sand and gravel, old roots and trunks covered with moss or painted red by the irony water ; foxgloves growing lean and pale towards the light ; clumps of fern and thirsty shy flowers who could not live away from moisture and shade. . . .”

And eventually the children moved to the Long Pool.

“When they were in the open they nearly fell down with astonishment. A huge grey horse, whose tail-hairs crinkled the glassy water, was drinking in the pool, and the ripples about his muzzle flashed like melted gold. On

his back sat an old, white-haired man dressed in a loose glimmery gown of chain-mail. . . .

" 'They should be here now, Sir Richard,' said Puck's deep voice among the willow-herb.

" 'They are here,' the knight said, and he smiled at Dan with the string of trouts in his hand. 'There seems no great change in boys since mine fished this water.' "

And thus the jingo writer introduces us and the children to a sight of Sir Richard Dalyngridge of the manor which still bears his name, to tell us something of the story of the mingling of the two races. He is now an old man, and has stories to tell—more than one—before Puck loses him. The story is *Young Men at the Manor*, and if you have not read it yet, then your fortune is great and there are still pleasures in the world, and you can "burst joy's grapes against your palate fine". But there is just this one little point, already mentioned. Sir Richard is telling of how he and Saxon Hugh held the manor given him—Hugh's manor, by the way—after Senlac, or St. Lache. Puck says :

" 'The Custom of Old England was here before your Norman knights came, and it outlasted them, though they fought against it cruel.'

" 'Not I,' said Sir Richard. 'I let the Saxons go their stubborn way, but when my own men at arms, Normans not six months in England, stood up and told me what was the custom of the country, then I was angry. Ah, good days. Ah, wonderful people ! And I loved them all.' "

There are two more Norman and Saxon stories to the book, and then there is the last story in *Rewards and Fairies*—*The Tree of Justice*, the most pathetic story yet written ; when among the following of Henry I's jester Rahere, a great man, is a blind beggar who is Harold the King, not dead at Senlac, but spending his blind life tramping from shrine to shrine—that was how legend of the countryside went—to expiate his broken vow to Duke William. The King has been shouted at by beaters in the chase. Feelings are high, and Rahere, to shame the Norman lords who would harry the Saxons still, lets his beggar come to the dinner-table. There is a pitiful talk as they bate him, and then Saxon Hugh kneels and even Henry gives the old man his royal cup of brotherhood. It is a story told to touch men's strong hearts with glory till they weep.

As an instance of the uncanniness of Kipling's intuition, the Office of Works, folk love to remember, have found the well into which false Fulke <sup>1</sup> was put to teach him a lesson.

<sup>1</sup> *Old Men at Pevensey.* •

*Britain and Rome*

But satisfying as is Norman tradition and the development of the "Early English", it is to the Roman story that we may return for the best that Puck can show the children. When we remember that Rome dominated—nay, ruled—England and a large part of Scotland for four hundred years, we can perhaps sympathize with Mussolini's secret ambition to add Albion once again to the lost Empire of Italy. Four hundred years is twice as long as the British have been in India ! And still much of our culture comes from Rome, though the Dark Age still refuses to reveal how far there was continuity of culture and how much it came back because there was none other in Europe. Then we know, too, as Kipling again has told us so clearly, how poor Ireland has suffered from never having "been to school with Rome".

To those of us who have not the sense of time and history ever before us, it is hard to remember that this distant landing of the Norman is far nearer to us, in point of time, than the Norman coming was to the second Roman landing. To the Normans, thus, Rome was far more distant than the Normans are from us. When we stand by Norman Pevensey within the great flint and herringbone walls of Roman Anderida, it is hard to realize that Anderida was older when the Norman keep was built than that keep is now. *Eheu, fugaces . . . !*

Puck has three scenes to show the children that deal with the legend of Rome and her fall—*A Centurion of the Thirtieth*, *On the Great Wall*, and *The Winged Hats*. And it all begins because Dan has a catapult and they had been learning the lays of ancient Rome.

"Now welcome ! Welcome, Sextus,"

sang Una, loading the catapult ;

"Now welcome to thy home,  
Why doest thou stay and turn away ?  
Here lies the road to Rome."

And she fired into a lull among the aspen leaves, and heard a grunt, which made her fear she had tickled up Gleason's cow.

" 'You little painted beast !' a voice cried. 'I'll teach you to sling your masters !' She looked down most cautiously, and saw a young man covered with hoopy bronze armour all glowing among the late broom. But what Una admired beyond all was his great bronze helmet, with a red horse-tail that flicked in the wind."



It was Parnesius, a country-born Roman of a colonist family—Kipling brings this out clearly and pertinently—Parnesius of a Roman family settled in Vectis, the Isle of Wight, and not quite pleased with the young Roman-born Romans who were always posting across France on leave to Rome. A centurion had he been of the Seventh Cohort of the Thirtieth Legion, the Ulpia Victrix, and he tells them of his home and their Numidian nurse and of Aquae Solis, the fashionable Bath, and the road thereto, like the road to Brighton in Georgian times.

To Kipling the parallel between Rome and Britain is always very present. He draws the likeness with our Frontier posts in India, in the young Romans serving overseas as in *The Church that was at Antioch*, and in the ways of Rome in Albion. The young Parnesius had gone to his father, who was Rome-born, and wanted to go soldiering in a troop of Dacian horse.

“‘I had seen some at Aquae Solis [as our lads used to see Silladar horse]. But he said, I had better begin service in a regular legion from Rome. Now, like many of our youngsters [*cf.* the provincials in America before the War of Independence and Canadians thirty or forty years ago], I was not too fond of anything Roman. The Roman-born officers looked down on us British-born as though we were barbarians. I told my father so.’

“‘I know they do,’ he said, ‘but remember, after all we are people of the Old Stock, and our duty must be to the Empire.’”

We may forgive Kipling using this debased jingo word; it was an obsession, and crops up at many irrelevant times. The sad thing is that most of the people who read its use by him stand up and cheer, and we who recognize the parallel and have seen the great keels sweep in from Canada and the seas far South, can see the living analogy. And because there were many still in authority who knew the father of Parnesius before he took to the Land of Vectis, the son finds himself in charge of a cohort marching the whole length of England to the Wall, and chatting with Dan and Una about it, for all the world like you and I. And then the country-born Parnesius sings :

“My father’s father saw it not,  
And I belike shall never come,  
To look on that so holy spot—  
The very Rome.”

Significant among the parallels is the allusion and glimpse of the Pictish chiefs between the millstones of the Winged Hats and the Romans, and their responding to good treatment by

the young Romans, as our Frontier friends have always done with our young officers in the modern British saga.

The story of the army life on the Wall is much as in the big Frontier cantonments such as at Razmak in Wāziristan to this day, save that this story is of the days when Rome was unsteady, the legions had been stripped of men, and the discipline of the troops had gone to pieces. We need not follow the story here except to say that this tragedy of the gradual decay of Rome, and the attempts of staunch officers to keep rot from the ranks, is stirring and pathetic.

We see Parnesius at length in charge of the Wall, and in *Winged Hats* the attempts of the Norsemen to break in at the ends and roll it up ; then the rash claim of empire of Maximus. The return of the new Emperor Theodosius, and the discomfiture of the Winged Hats is stirring reading. The long, bitter defence by Parnesius for Maximus with no troops worth having, only to find himself rescued by a régime that he was not prepared to serve longer, is probably good history. He disappears into that mysterious "dark age" aforesaid to fight, as the Rome-Britons must have, the fierce disruption of civilization, the inroads of the Picts, the Caledonians, the Winged Hats, and on the South and East Coast the Saxon, with no effective Counts of the Saxon shore to stem the rising tides of savagery. The illumination that Puck and Parnesius give is a light in which our imaginations can roam along that great Wall—that still remains—and the recovered glories of Richborough.

There is a happy ballad that tells why some men came to serve on the Wall :

When I left Rome for Lalage's sake  
By the Legion's Road to Rimini,  
She vowed her heart was mine to take  
With me and my shield to Rimini.

And wisest of all is the Picts' song, which the poor Black Emperor might sing :

Rome never looks where she treads,  
Always her heavy hooves fall,  
On our stomachs, our hearts or our heads ;  
And Rome never heeds when we bawl.

All the same, it is a far cry from ice-cream to Hadrian's Wall; and then . . .

Her sentries pass on . . . that is all,  
And we gather behind them in hordes,  
And plot to reconquer the Wall,  
With only our tongues for our swords.

The outlawed and dissatisfied Ethiopian may be more tiresome than even the Pict to modern Rome, govern she never so wisely.

### *England through the Ages*

Medieval England, now Britain, did not change to England till the Angles came and the dark age ended. The Saxon time, emerging from that unrecorded period when the second Christianity was coming, is indicated for us in the story of *The Conversion of St. Wilfrid*. Kipling, who delights in the old-time thegn who became the squire and had his duties to the land very precisely defined, tells of Meon the old heathen landowner who has the tame seal Padda ; Meon will not be bothered with baptism, although his people have been. His heart is sound and staunch and kindly, and form and ceremonies seem little enough for him, and the old pagan doctrine that "as a man sows so shall he reap" expresses his philosophy, sowing always wisely and with kindness and justice. The English countryside is full of Meons to this day, especially in Sussex by the sea, Sussex which was the last county to become Christian—and the clergy will even suggest that it hasn't happened yet.

St. Wilfrid, the evangelizing bishop, is touring the land, and with him Eddi the priest, the same of whom Kipling sang *Eddi's Service* in his chapel at Manhood End. Eddi, the bishop's chaplain, hates Padda the seal, who saves them from the tide, and the end of it all is that Meon, thinking himself cut off by the tide, is not going to save himself by being converted to that end only !

And as we talk of Eddi, let us quote from the service on the boisterous Christmas Eve when none would face the weather (A.D. 687).

"Wicked weather for walking,"  
Said Eddi of Manhood End,  
"But I must go on with the service  
For such as care to attend."

The altar lamps were lighted . . .  
An old marsh-donkey came.

And a wet yoke-weary bullock  
Pushed in through the open door.

"How do I know what is greatest,  
How do I know what is least ?  
That is My Father's business,"  
Said Eddi, Wilfrid's priest.

"But, three are gathered together—  
Listen to me and attend."

And he told the Ox of a manger  
And a stall in Bethlehem,  
And he spoke to the Ass of a Rider  
That rode to Jerusalem.

But there was more to England than Saxons and Picts, and now the children are in the mill attic looking out to Little Lindens Farm and the spot where Jack Cade was killed. Here we meet, for the first time, Harry Dawe, son of the mill, sent to Merton by Father Roger to become a scholar and a great designer and draftsman.

In the first story—*Hal o' the Draft*—we and you who live by the Hammer-woods and Hammer-ponds, see where the great hammer on its lever would go "Boom-pitty !" and hammer out the anchors that you see in Lewes Castle and the old cannon for the King's ships, when we traded anchors and cannon over half Europe. There is a pretty story that he tells the children of how the gun-founders, instead of delivering the cannon for the King's ships, were hiding them and pretending they were miscasts and the like, and selling to pirate Sir Andrew Barton for a better price. Then he tells how information was given to palky old Sir John Pelham of Brightling, Justice, how that wise old man was not going to hang half Sussex for the roguery, but showed how they would pretend that the hidden *cache* had merely been collected conveniently for the King's pleasure and would go fetch it.

Sir John, in half-armour, with armed retainers and bailiffs, rides himself to fetch the cannon, while the casters, badly sold, looked on and never turned a hair at seeing their eyes wiped so prettily.

"They say that morning's work cost our John [John Collins, the founder, who had made the guns to smuggle overseas] two hundred pounds, and he never winked an eyelid, not even when he saw the guns carted off to Lewes."

Later when he was in the church-tower seeing the bells he had given being rung,

"the old man pinches the bell-rope with one hand, scratches his neck with t'other—'Sooner she was pulling yon clapper than my neck,' he says. That was all ! That was Sussex . . . seely Sussex for everlasting."

And here you must remember that "silly" Sussex means "sly", and quite the reverse of "foolish"; some men say it is but a compound of "slow" and "sly".

Incidentally, Hal Dawe got the rood screen and various other things for St. Barnabas Church all because Sir John Pelham knew that there was a time to hang and a time to let be.

Again we see *Hal o' the Draft*—Harry Dawe, born in the mill—made Sir Harry Dawe by King Henry VII, not because he had helped to beautify numberless buildings all over England and made a great name for himself, but because he had told the King that the ornamentation that the Queen wanted on the royal yacht would wash off in a day in a rough sea, thereby saving the King, who was more than economical, thirty good pounds. Then, as the story goes, Springett the builder capped it in more modern style; said the squire had given him a handsome *douceur* not because he had built him a very fine stable, but because he had said that the squire's lady could not have a ha-ha built that she wished, owing to the springs in the hillside of the sloping field in front of the manor. Husbands are not always men enough to gainsay the lady themselves, not even kings! That story is called *The Wrong Thing* and comes in *Rewards and Fairies*, but Harry Dawe is our first friend in *Hal o' the Draft*.

Also will you learn the grave aphorism of Bob Brigandyne, "Steal in measure" being the burden of his saga, which is the proper morality concerning the long-established principle of graft and perks. And the end of *Hal o' the Draft* is the *Smuggler's Song* that held good from Bo-peep to Hawkhurst and Norman's Bay to "The Roebuck" up in the Forest:

Five and twenty ponies  
Trotting through the dark—  
Brandy for the Parson,  
Baccy for the clerk.  
Them that asks no questions isn't told a lie—  
Watch the wall, my darling, while the Gentlemen go by!

### *Sussex and Saxon*

Before we leave Sussex, let us for all time frame the opening page of mystic *They*, when Kipling, the ardent earlier motorist driving Barbara—or whatever it was that he christened his "devil carriage"—snaps forward his lever and opens the throttle:

"One view called to another; one hilltop to its fellow, half across the county, and since I could answer at no more trouble than the snapping forward of a lever, I let the country flow under my wheels. The orchid-studded flats

of the East gave way to the thyme, ilex and grey grass of the Downs ; these again to the rich cornland and fig-trees of the lower coast, where you carry the beat of the tide on your left hand for fifteen level miles ; and when at last I turned inland through a huddle of rounded hills and woods I had run myself clean out of my known marks . . . I found hidden villages where bees, the only things awake, boomed in eighty-foot lindens that overhung grey Norman churches ; miraculous brooks diving under stone bridges built for heavier traffic than would ever vex them again ; tithe-barns, larger than their churches, and an old smithy that cried out aloud how it had once been a hall of the Knights of the Temple. . . . A quick turn plunged me first into a green cutting brim-full of liquid sunshine, next into a gloomy tunnel where last year's dead leaves whispered and scuffled about my tyres. . . . Here the road changed frankly into a carpeted ride on whose brown velvet spent primrose-clumps showed like jade."

After which, as they say in the East, *aur kiya* ? What more ?

If you know your rural England well, and have just intercourse with Brito-Saxon, who is so very little removed from his good origins, you will enjoy *The Land*, that long poem of obstinacy, knowledge and possession. It begins :

When Julius Fabricius, sub-Prefect of the Weald,  
In the days of Diocletian owned the Lower River-Field,  
He called to him Hobdenius—a Briton of the Clay,  
Saying . "What about that River-piece for layin' in to hay?"  
And the Aged Hobden answered : "I remember as a lad  
My father told your father that she wanted dreenin' bad.  
An' the more that you neeglect her the less you'll get her clean.  
Have it jest *as* you've a mind to, but, if I was you, I'd  
dreen."

And then through the ages it was Ogier the Dane who owned the Lower River Field, and a Hobden was still his serf. Ogier was not happy about the field and asks Hobden, who replies :

"Have it *jest* as you've a mind to, but I've proved it time on  
time  
If you want to change her nature you have *got* to give her  
lime!"  
Ogier died. His sons grew English. Anglo-Saxon was  
their name,  
Till out of blossomed Normandy another pirate came ;

And our Lower River Field, he gave to William of Warenne.

And so old England goes on, Hobden still the real owner and authority :

*Georgii Quinti Anno Sexto*, I, who own the River Field,  
Am fortified with title-deeds, attested, signed and sealed.

I can fish—but Hobden tickles. I can shoot—but Hobden  
wires.

I repair, but he reopens, certain gaps which men allege,  
Have been used by every Hobden since a Hobden swapped a  
hedge.

“Hob, what about that River-Bit?” I turned again  
With Fabricius and Ogier and William of Warenne.

“Hev it jest as you’ve a mind to, *but* . . .” and here he takes  
command,

For whoever pays the taxes, old Mus’ Hobden owns the land.

And *The King’s Task* is a long poem telling us again the  
ways of the Saxon which William Hohenzollern so grievously  
misjudged :

Between the cliff and the forest, there ruled a Saxon King.  
Stubborn all were his people, a stark and a jealous horde—  
Not to be schooled by the cudgel, scarce to be cowed by the  
sword ;

Blithe to turn at their pleasure, bitter to cross in their mood,  
And set on the paths of their choosing, as the hogs of Andred’s  
Wood.

Now, that is very good Saxon, very good Kipling and  
amazingly like what John Bunyan, who knew his people well,  
wrote of them.

But *The King’s Task* is but a war allegory after all, for thus  
it gets near its end :

But now we are purged of that fever—cleansed by the letting  
of blood,

Something leaner of body—something keener of mood.  
And the men new-freed from the levies return to the fields  
again

Matching a hundred battles, cottar and lord and thane.

The moral of it all is that it is the King and the people who  
will put old England right, and that is better even than an  
Oswald Mosley when a land gets out of hand.

In *Norman and Saxon* you see how this story of the country-  
side which, the baron tells to his son, goes on for ever. It is  
always worth remembering whether you hunt or shoot, or only  
come down from Lunnon to walk on anyone’s land. This is how  
it ends, and if those who come to the country will remember,  
light will be their life there :

Appear with your wife and the children at their weddings  
and funerals and feasts.

Be polite but not friendly to Bishops; be good to all poor  
parish priests.

Say "we", "us", and "ours" when you're talking, instead of  
"you fellows" and "I".

Don't ride over seeds; keep your temper; and *never you*  
*tell 'em a lie!*

### *Dymchurch Flit*

If you know Romney Marsh—and I knew it before Kipling did, with its grumbling dykes and its mirage, a fishing-smack in your back garden, and its church spires down on the floor alongside the nave—then you will know how Kipling has drawn the whole heart of it in *Dymchurch Flit*, though the Marsh proper be more by way of Lydd. We will not bother with the charm and the truth of the two Sussex men by the hop-kiln, with every word ringing truer than the one before, but let us follow the chat for a moment, the children listening while Tom Shoesmith the wanderer is chatting with old Hobden, who is roasting potatoes for the children at the kiln. Hobden's soft-wit son, the Bee-boy, is there too, awaiting his share of the taters.

"As Hobden opened the shutter to see if the potatoes were done Tom Shoesmith said to the children: 'Put a-plenty salt on 'em. That will show you the sort of man *I* be.' Again he winked, and again the Bee-boy laughed and Una stared at Dan.

. . . . .

"'Some of us can't abide Horseshoes, or Church Bells, or Running Water.' He turned to Hobden, who was backing out of the roundel. 'D'you mind the great floods at Robertsbridge, when the miller's man was drowned in the street?'

"'Middlin' well. . . . I was courtin' my woman on the Marsh that year. Carter to Mus' Plum was gettin' ten-shilling's week. Mine was a Marsh Woman.'

"'Won'erful odd-gates place Romney Marsh,' said Tom Shoesmith. 'I've heard say the world's divided like into Europe, Ashy, Afriky, Ameriky, Australy an' Romney Marsh.' ["England, Wales and Romney Marsh", is the correct saying.]

"'The Marsh folk think so,' said Hobden. 'I had a hem o' trouble to get my woman to leave it.'

"'Where did she come out of? I've forgot, Ralph.'



"'Dymchurch under the Wall,' Hobden answered, a potato in his hand."

Tom then asked if she'd be a Pett or a Whitgift. A Whitgift she was, and therefore seized of the Marsh for all time, and her way with bees was unusual.

"'Ah! I've heard say the Whitgifts could see further through a millstone than most. . . . Did she now?'"

"'She was honest-innocent of any nigro-mancin', said Hobden. 'Only she'd read signs and sinnifictions out o' birds flyin', stars fallin', bees hivin', and such. An' she'd lie awake listenin' for calls she said.'"

"'That don't prove naught,' said Tom. 'All Marsh folk has been smugglers since time everlastin'. 'Twould be in her blood to listen out o' nights.'"

"'Nature-ally,' old Hobden replied, smiling. 'I mind when there was smugglin' a sight nearer than the Marsh be. But that wasn't my woman's trouble. 'Twas a passel o' no-sense talk'—he dropped his voice—'about Pharisees.'"

"'Yes, I've heard Marshmen belieft in 'em.' Tom looked straight at the wide-eyed children. . . ."

"'Pharisees?' cried Una. 'Fairies? Oh, I see.'"

"'People o' the Hills,' said the Bee-boy, throwing half of his potato towards the door.

"'There you be!'" said Hobden pointing at him. 'My boy, he has her eyes, and her out-gate senses. That's what she called 'em!'"

"'And what do you think of it all?'"

"'Um, um,' Hobden rumbled. 'A man that uses fields an' shaws after dark as I've done, he don't go out of his road except for keepers.'"

"'But settin' that aside?' said Tom coaxingly. 'I saw ye throw the Good Piece out-at-doors just now. Do ye believe or *do* ye?'"

"'There was a great, black eye to that tater,' said Hobden, indignantly.

"'My liddle eye didn't see 'un, then. It looked as if you meant it for . . . for Any One that might need it. But setting that aside. D'ye believe or *do* ye?'"

Now, the way to appreciate this is not for the Sussex folks' way o' looking at things, though that is good enough, but for the skill of the conjurer in introducing his trick . . . in leading to natural talk of the Little People in the Marsh and then for Tom to tell the story of the Widow Whitgift

and the flitting of the fairies. Tom tells the story of the Marsh first to the children and the whispering of the great dykes o' nights.

"‘You’ve seen how flat she is—the Marsh? You’d think nothin’ easier than to walk eend on acrost her? Ah, but the diks an’ the water-lets, they twists the roads about as ravelly as witch-yard on the spindles.’"

And that’s gospel truth, as I know, who’ve been range officer in Lydd with the Siege Artillery. . . . And so the story goes on to tell in good natural sequence of the leaving of the Little People. Tom tells why :

"‘Queen Bess’s father he used the parish churches something shameful. Justabout tore the gizzards out of I dunnamany. Some folk in England they held with ‘en . . . and it eended in ‘em takin’ sides and burnin’ each other no bounds. That tarrified the Pharisees. . . . This Reformation tarrified the Pharisees same as the reaper goin’ round a last stand o’ wheat tarrifies rabbits.’"

And then you have the story of the Pharisees clamouring for a boat to take them over the Channel, told by Tom Shoesmith, whom only Una had recognized. The Widow Whitgift loaned her deaf and dumb son and her blind son to row them over, she did. When they were in the boats and they stepped mast and sail, the blind son speaks :

"‘“Mother, we’re waiting your Leave and Good-will to take Them over.”’"

"‘She was a fine, valiant woman the Widow Whitgift. She stood twistin’ the eends of her long hair over her fingers, an’ she shook like a poplar, makin’ up her mind. . . . ‘Last she drives the word past her teeth, an’ “Go !” she says. “Go with my leave an’ Good-will.” . . . Up sail they did, an’ away they went, deep as Rye barge, away into the off-shore mistes, an’ the Widow Whitgift she sat down and eased her grief till mornin’ light.’"

And then Hobden reveals that he had heard the tale often enough.

"‘I never heard she was *all* alone.’"

"‘I remember now. The one called Robin [that was Puck] stayed with her, they tell. She was all too grievous to listen to his promises.’"

"‘Ah ! She should ha’ made her bargain beforehand. I allus told my woman so !’ Hobden cried."

•

But all she got, as Tom tells, was this :

“ ‘So long as Whitgift blood lasted, Robin promised there should allers be one of her stock, that . . . no Trouble ’ud lie on, no Maid ’ud sigh, no Night could frighten, no Fright could harm, no Harm could make sin, and no Woman could make a fool of.’ ”

“ ‘Well, ain’t that just me ?’ said the Bee-boy, where he sat in the silver square of the great September moon, that was staring into the oast-house door.”

But Tom would not admit Una’s challenge that he was Puck, and that she knew him by his remark about the salt, as he saw the children home.

*Rewards and Fairies*, that takes its name from the beginning of the verse “Farewell, Rewards and Fairies”, takes us slowly up to the beginning of our time. The story *Cold Iron* tells how Sir Huon and the Lady Bordeaux-Esclairmonde, fairy lords, must needs steal a derelict English child to be a fairy ; but the child finds a heavy slave-ring, slips it on himself, and must fain go back to his own folk to be a serf, for “Cold Iron shall be your master”. So does he give us lore of the Little People, the Pixies, or Pictses, who may have been the little Picts, Caledons and Firbolgs, who took to the heather and the wilds, like Hottentots before the more developed races, and from whom the legends come. If you know the story of the witch trials in Cumberland in the eighteenth century you will believe in the underground leavens that endured almost to our own time.

Among the ballads of the period is that of *Old Mother Laid-in-Wool who popped out of bed* to remind us, with Kipling’s uncanny knowledge, that to encourage the wool trade in Tudor days you had to be buried in wool or pay five shillings !

### *Queen Bess and King George*

We are rather short in the Kipling legend of stories he might have told. Nothing of the Jacobite days, or the Roses, the Crusades, or Atkins in France with the Black Prince, or Henry V ; though the Widow Whitgift comes back to us to prophesy of Frankie Drake. Nicholas Culpepper we peep at with his herbs. . . . “Excellent herbs had our fathers of old.” Queen Bess we do happily see with her glorious young men, and read too the sad rhyme of her passing beauty in *The Looking-glass* :

Backwards and forwards and sideways did she pass,  
Making up her mind to face the looking-glass.  
The cruel looking-glass that will never show a lass  
As comely or as kindly or as young as once she was !

It is a country dance, this roundelay, and it begins :

Queen Bess was Harry's daughter, stand forward, partners all.  
In ruff and stomacher and gown  
She danced King Philip down-a-down,  
And left her shoe 'tshow it was true.

(The very tune I'm playing you in Norgem at Brickwall)<sup>1</sup>

Old Oliver he has left alone, alas ; but in *Brother Squaretoes* we see the Indians trying to find out from Washington what policy he was following. Of him there is a charming presentation, and the Indian greeting him with the sign of "an Installed Master", if you know what that is. Or you can meet Talleyrand and Boney in *A Priest in Spite of Himself*, and "Aurettes and Lees like as two peas".

And then, to bring you near the tears of things, read of *Marlake Witches*, and the sweet elfin daughter, perhaps sixteen, of the widowed squire, who is in a decline. The old seaman in the village cuts her a maple stick one inch long for every year of her age, tells her to prop up her bedroom window always, and to repeat often at her window the names of the twelve apostles, with a breath between each, so that the lungs may have their share of oxygen. Arthur Wellesley commanding the troops on the coast comes, too, staying probably at Beauport Park that General Murray had built, and named after his camp at Beauport below Quebec, the looted arms whereof he built into the wall. Then, since Kipling must needs know that it was a French doctor in Napoleonic days who discovered the stethoscope, he parades him prisoner of war on parole in the village, vying with the dull English village pill for the girl's love, but knowing, as the other did not, that no skill could save. . . . Sad, my masters !—as only Kipling can play on pathos, an he will, better than any man.

And the earthly brain of the man who could thus show us England in the growing, and strike old broken strings to melody, now lies, a-waiting, in the Poets' Corner in the Abbey. Alas and alack-a-day !

So let us say good-bye to early England, but not to Sussex and the rest of England that is above even Sussex, in a verse or two, and see later how he touches more modern England :

I'm just in love with all these three,  
The Weald and the Marsh and the Down Countrie ;  
Nor I don't know which I love the most,  
The Weald or the Marsh or the white chalk coast !

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• <sup>1</sup> Northiam, Sussex.

## CHAPTER XV

### KIPLING, THE EMPIRE AND FRANCE

Kipling and the Empire at Large—*The Song of the Cities*—Australia and New Zealand—The Veld—Canada—*Letters of Travel*—Kipling and France.

#### *Kipling and the Empire at Large*

(DEFINITION : “*British Empire*”, the universally accepted name for the colonies, possessions and self-governing daughter nations, with India, forming the great Commonwealth that upholds peace, justice, and safe seas throughout the world, and co-operates with all who have the same aims.)

BEFORE the old Queen and her Islands woke from their slumber at the “First” Jubilee of 1887, Sir Charles Dilke, in *Greater Britain*, and Froude in *Oceana*, had written in proud and stimulating form of the great world-heritage that sprang from Albion. It is now a far cry back to those days of 1887, in many ways as spacious as our own. But those fifty years have seen the “Red Duster” on every sea, and Britons leading civilization, Christianity, and good example, round the whole world. What Nelson did to Villeneuve, Jellicoe did to von Tirpitz, and the freedom of the seas is still the object of the British Fleet. Even as 1887 was calling the Commonwealths to witness, there was arising in India a successor to Dibdin, that necessary poet who was to bring the essential stir and enthusiasm to men’s minds. The great awareness of their Empire, the love for “Home”, the very Rome they never see, the sense of pride in the daughter nations, was aroused by Francis Adams’s “high priest of adultery”, by England’s “jingo” king; in other words, by Kipling, who knew men and women and all that Britain and her children stood for in the support of the good of the world.

What *Greater Britain* and *Oceana* did for the more deeply read and the library folk, *From Sea to Sea*, *Letters of Travel*, *The Seven Seas* and *The Five Nations* did for the press and the people at large. Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Singapore, the Gates of the East, India in all its glory and suffering, the veld, the Nile and the Congo, all sprang on to the canvas and lit up on the screen when Kipling touched the subjects. Poets and writers may have done it more subtly and in more polished

guise, but the prose and verse of Kipling brought raw, live and dancing colour to it, as well as pride and sympathy.

Let us turn to *The Song of the Sons* and see the Empire lit up :

Turn and the world is thine. Mother be proud of thy seed !  
Count, are we feeble or few ? Hear, is our speech so rude ?  
Look, are we poor in the land ? Judge, are we men of The Blood ?

And then :

Gifts have we only today—Love without promise or fee—  
Hear, for thy children speak, from the uttermost parts of the sea !

This, too, was even before Canada and Australia sent their troops to the Boer War.

And then there is *England's Answer* :

Truly ye come of the Blood, slower to bless than to ban ;  
Little used to lie down at the bidding of any man.  
Flesh of the flesh that I bred, bone of the bone that I bare,  
Stark as your sons shall be—stern as your fathers were.

Then there is the prophetic answering verse of this song, written long before the World War :

Also we will make promise, So long as the Blood endures,  
I shall know that your good is mine : ye shall feel that my  
strength is yours ;  
In the day of Armageddon, at the last great fight of all,  
That Our House stand together and the pillars do not fall.

And so he sung, to the waxen Heath, the Wattle bloom and Maple-leaf and the Southern Broom, each to his own flower and the one heart.

There is, too, *The Native Born*, with its stir for all the great folk overseas, in the days when the Queen was more than ever the "King" :

We've drunk to the Queen—God Bless her !  
We've drunk to our mother's land ;  
We've drunk to our English brother,  
(But he does not understand) ;  
We've drunk to the wide creation,  
And the Cross swings low for the morn,  
Last toast, and of obligation,  
A health of the Native born !

Parnesius, too, was native born, of Vectis, far from the mother Rome, and the Sons of the Widow will note the "obligation" and later the "Cable-tow".

I charge you charge your glasses—  
I charge you drink with me  
To the men of the Four New Nations  
And the Islands of the Sea—

To the land of the waiting springtime,  
 To our fire-meal, meat-fed men,  
 To the tall, deep-bosomed women,  
 And the children nine and ten !

And since all this was written we have the glory and tragedy of Anzac Cove, and Vimy Ridge, and the taking of German East, O prophet mine !

### *The Song of the Cities*

Outside the Dominions even, in their world importance, are the great sea cities of the Empire, and *The Song of the Cities*, in fifteen short but brilliant stanzas, stands as a resounding reminder of the heritage. Some will remember an extraordinary occasion at the Mansion House when General Hertzog spoke of the glory of the Empire and the pride of its components, the free Dominions, and how an amazed hush fell when a British Cabinet Minister—never mind his name—got up to say : “There ain’t no British Empire ; there is Great Britain, and there is Australia, Canada, etc.” The Empire refused the great renunciation, knowing that its components were always free, yet held by a tie that for fifty good reasons is unassailable. The stanzas of the fifteen ocean cities that the Imperial Navy alone can protect, emphasize romance, achievement and a wealth that is being better distributed every year that we grow wiser.

Bombay, Calcutta and Madras have right pride of place, though Quebec and Halifax run them close. Hark to the romance of Bombay as she sings :

Royal and Dower Royal, I the Queen,  
 Fronting the richest sea with richer lands—  
 A thousand mills roar through me where I glean  
 All races from all lands.

Or Madras :

Clive kissed me on the mouth and eyes and brow.

Or Singapore, which now leaps to the heritage of which Kipling sang forty years ago, sitting on the Gate of Sea- and Air-way.

Hail, Mother ! East and West must seek my aid  
 Ere the spent gear may dare the ports afar.  
 The second doorway of the wide world’s trade  
 Is mine to loose or bar.

And so on round the Seven Seas ; and the cry must be :  
 “Skald to the Viking !”

# Australia and New Zealand

It is in verse rather than prose that the Dominion of the Southern Seas stands forth under Kipling's pen. First in *The Song of the English*, with the stanza to each capital overseas just quoted; in the case of Australia, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane, with Hobart and Auckland to follow. Here is Melbourne :

Greeting ! Nor fear nor favour won us place,  
Got between greed of gold and dread of drouth,  
Loud-voiced and reckless as the wild tide-race  
That whips our harbour mouth !

And Brisbane in punning lines :

The northern strip, beneath the Southern skies—  
I build a nation for an Empire's need,  
Suffer a little, and my land shall rise  
Queen over lands indeed !

The peace of New Zealand comes happily in for-ever sun-kissed *Auckland* :

Last, loneliest, loveliest, exquisite, apart—  
On us, on us the unswerving season smiles,  
Who wonder 'mid our fern why men depart  
To seek the Happier Isles !

But the sum of admiration is expressed in 1934. When the Duke of Gloucester dedicated the Shrine of Remembrance on Armistice Day at Melbourne on the occasion of the Centenary of the State of Victoria, Rudyard Kipling wrote an ode, made public that day in Australia :

So long as memory, valour and faith endure,  
Let these stones witness, through the years to come,  
How once there was a people fenced, secure,  
Behind great waters, girdling a far home,  
Their own and their land's youth ran side by side,  
Heedless and headlong as their unyoked star.

Because of certain men who strove to reach  
Through the red surf, the crest no man might hold,  
And gave their name for ever to a beach  
Which shall outlive Troy's tale when Time is old.

Merciless riders whom Megiddo sent forth.

Stormed through the night from Amiens and made good.

They then returned to their desired land.



Having revealed their nation in earth's sight,  
 So long as sacrifice and honour stand,  
 And their own sun, at the hushed hour shall light,  
 The Shrine of these, their dead.

### *The Veld*

Of South Africa Kipling has written more in verse than in prose. But he lived several years in Cape Town, under the shadow of Groote Schurr, in a little house modelled after the old Dutch ones, which Cecil Rhodes lent him. There the great man came often, showing a charming side to his character in playing with the Kipling children. Kipling married in America, but to live several years in South Africa is the next-best way of showing your love for the land to marrying its daughter.

The glamour of the veld comes to us in prose in those stories already discussed in Chapter VII; but the verse in *The Seven Seas* treats of something more enduring than war—of that dream of Cecil Rhodes which is also the dream of George Pirow, Defence Minister of the Union in 1929. Hark to the lines to Cape Town:

Hail! Snatched and bartered oft from hand to hand,  
 I dream my dream by rock and heath and pine,  
 Of Empire to the Northward. Ay, one land  
 From Lion's Head to Line.

And again *South Africa*:

But her Pagan beauty drew

Christian gentlemen a few  
 From Berwick unto Dover,  
 For she was South Africa,  
 And she was South Africa,  
 She was our South Africa,  
 Africa all over!

And if you had chased o' nights Munik Hertzog as I have, and seen him escape in his pyjamas in a Cape-cart with his brother the *rechter* and young Willie from a farm *na bei* Fouriesberg . . . or over the Gnadeberg, you would rejoice to see him Premier. You would also believe that owing to this perverse recrudescence of nationalism that has mis-seized the whole world, he is driving a kittle team, and that he is trying to say as the Amir of Kabul said to us in the War, "Don't listen to what I say, watch what I do." So also, perhaps, with Dev! You will also re-echo the sentiments in *Piet* as sung by Atkins:

No more I'll 'ear is rifle crack  
 Along the block'ouse fence—  
 The beggar's on the peaceful tack,  
 Regardless of expense.

Ah there, Piet ! with your brand-new English plough,  
Your gratis tents and cattle, an' your most ungrateful  
frow.

You've made the British taxpayer rebuild your country  
seat—

I've known some pet battalions charge<sup>1</sup> a darn' sight less  
than Piet.

Smuts and van Deventer, and burghers not a few are  
Empire names, even when some would forget it for a while :

Then scorn not the African kopje,  
The kopje that smiles in the heat,  
The wholly unoccupied kopje  
The home of Cornelius and Piet

And then the story of Piets veld—*Zoueet* or *Zour* :

Royal the Pageant closes  
Lit by the last of the sun,  
Opal and ash-of-roses  
Cinnamon, umber and dun.

*General Joubert, 1900*, a lament, hits the keynote of it all :

Later shall rise a people, sane and great,  
Forged in strong fires, by equal war made one ;  
Telling old battles over without hate—  
Not least his name shall pass from sire to son.

And of Cecil Rhodes who followed Joubert two years later  
—lying ever on the Matoppos :

Dreamer devout by vision led  
Beyond our guess or reach,

. . . . .

There, till the vision he foresaw  
Splendid and whole arise,  
And unimagined Empires draw  
To council 'neath his skies.

And that, sirs, is the vision that Mr. Pirow sees also !

### Canada

To Halifax of Nova Scotia, amid the real Gaelic, sang  
Kipling in *The Song of the Cities* already quoted, also to Quebec  
and Montreal, and to far Vancouver. Read *Halifax* :

Into the mist my guardian prowls put forth,  
Behind the mist, my virgin ramparts lie,  
The Warden of the Honour of the North,  
Sleepless and veiled am I !

<sup>1</sup> There may be jest here.

And *Victoria* :

From East to West the circling word has passed,  
Till West is East beside our land-locked blue ;  
From East to West the tested chain holds fast,  
The well-forged link rings true !

It is the tested chain of the C.P.R. and the C.N.R. that has kept Canada from the United States, and the depleted pockets of the shareholders may take comfort thereby.

*Our Lady of the Snows* was written in honour of the Canadian Preferential Tariff of 1897, which gave Britain preference, with no reciprocation, and gave Free Traders a valuable lesson. Canada, true Lady of the Snows, but equally lady of a smiling summer, who takes her snow joyously, was not over-pleased at Kipling's title, since the snow deters her not ; but the poem is beautiful in line and staunch in sentiment. Thus :

A Nation spoke to a Nation,  
A Queen sent word to a Throne :  
"Daughter am I in my mother's house,  
But mistress in my own.  
The gates are mine to open,  
As the gates are mine to close,  
And I set my house in order,"  
Said our Lady of the Snows.

"Many there be that hate us,"  
Said our Lady of the Snows.

And then :

"Carry the word to my sisters—  
To the Queens of the East and South.  
I have proven faith in the Heritage  
By more than the word of mouth.  
They that are wise may follow  
Ere the world's war-trumpet blows  
But I—I am first in the battle,"  
Said our Lady of the Snows.

And once again remember the pipes and the feather bonnets at the Mass on Vimy Ridge (1936) and give our prophet all honour in his own country.

In *Letters of Travel* there is much that is fascinating of Canada, both East and West, and of the prairies, of Vancouver, searching satire on the labour tyranny too, and the question of white and Japanese emigration, a subject dead in that particular guise—the charm and glory of the new Winnipeg, and the great forging ahead that the world was to interrupt so sadly—spoiled by the fear of the labour canker, a canker which,

perhaps so far as Canada went, the War put right. Of Columbia, the other side of the "Räckies" read this ; it is as true now :

"A little axe-work and road-metalling gives a city one of the loveliest water-girt parks that we have outside the tropics . . . if they care to lift up their eyes from their almost sub-tropical gardens, they can behold snowy peaks across blue bays, which must be good for the soul . . . they are as ignorant of drouth, murrain, pestilence, locusts and blight, as they are of the true meaning of want and fear."

There is a sad little story of broken-hearted Sikhs, all old soldiers—and conditions that eventually brought about sad happenings, and added much to tragedy of the Ghadr Rebellion in India in 1915, run from San Francisco, with the German agents assisting.

Discussing the whole Canadian and Imperial problem up to the days close before the War, you will find some very pertinent remarks, ending up as follows :

"Meantime the only serious enemy to the Empire, within or without, is that very Democracy which depends on the Empire for its proper comforts, and in whose behalf these things are urged."

Happily British democracy is saner now, and realizes that if it goes slow it can steadily share more and more in the world's good things and wealth. If it goes fast all vanishes as smoke and mirage. There were times, as is evident from what Kipling saw in Vancouver, when democracy might mean suicide and not partnership. But in all his writing he is enthusiastically conscious of the greatness in all our people, of all their grades. How he wrote of the men who do the work is recorded in a previous chapter.

In *A People at Home* he tells of all Canada from business to lumber—of the great energy of the people—who do, save in Vancouver, twelve months' work in six. That is Canada's glory and grief, and why some resented Kipling's name, "Our Lady of the Snows".

"The Maples tell when it is time to finish, and all work in hand is regulated by their warning signal. Some jobs can be put through before winter ; others must be laid aside ready to jump forward, without a lost moment, in spring. Thus from Quebec to Calgary a note of drive—not hustle, but drive and finish up—hummed like the steam-threshers on the still autumn air."

Hunters and sportsmen were coming in from the North ;

prospectuses with them, their faces full of mystery, their pockets full of samples, and so forth, and all who have seen it know how true, and how they liked the kindly, helpful—nay, noble—folk.

If you have stood on the shores of one of the Great Lakes you will recognize and realize the surprise that Kipling graphically expressed that a fresh-water sea should throw great ships about, should have great docks, and lash wide shores with great waves.

“There is a quiet horror about the Great Lakes which grows as one revisits them. Fresh water has no right or call to dip over the horizon, pulling down and pushing up the hulls of big steamers; no right to tread the slow, deep-sea dance-step between wrinkled cliffs; nor to roar in on weed and sand beaches between vast headlands that run for leagues into haze and sea-fog.”

It is one thing for the great inland Caspian, as salt as the open sea, to storm and rage, but for Lake Superior . . . well! There are no rivers to bring the brine—being trickle-fed from a thousand gullies—and of course Kipling noticed it.

Of Canada he wrote perhaps most, since it is the greatest Dominion as yet, and its great trans-continental railway brings it easily within view—the Canada which means, they say, “What is it?”—and no one yet knows.

Canada, happily, is not unmindful of how to train her young people. In the public library of Toronto—no mean city of the Empire—it was considered essential to provide a room in which “intermediate adolescents”—horrible phrase—might borrow and browse. To call the room “for adolescents” was unthinkable, but the chief librarian had a stimulating idea. “Let us call it the Kipling Room, and fill it with Kipling books” . . . and it was so. It is filled with all the Kipling books, many copies of each, and thousands are taken to read, so that many renewals are necessary. Well done, Toronto! “That’s the sort of thing to give the troops!” Kipling takes prior place over Edgar Wallace and Ethel M. Dell in the demands of the readers.

### *Letters of Travel*

In *Letters of Travel* (1892-1913) are included three earlier publications: from *Tideway to Tideway* (1892), *Letters to the Family* (1907) and *Egypt of the Magician* (1913). And of the revelations of the world and the Empire which first stirred the Dominions, these be they. There was good wholesome talk in them, too, for young people whose hats and heads were not quite fitted. The wisdom of some of it is as good today as when

it was written; of the prophecies good and evil many are fulfilled or on the way to fulfilment. *Captains Courageous*, the name taken afterwards for the American story of the sea, is good reading of the eternal romance of development, now a thousand times accentuated by petrol and 'plane.

"By the time that man has seen these things, and a few others that go with a boom he may say that he has lived. . . . He knows the inward kernel of that romance, which some little folk say is vanished. Here they lie in their false teeth, for Cortes is not dead, nor Drake, and Sir Philip Sidney dies every few months if you know where to look. The adventurers and the captains courageous of old have only changed their dress a little and altered their employment to suit the world in which they move.

"Clive came down from Lobengula's country a few months ago protesting there was an empire there, and finding very few that believed. Hastings studied a map of South Africa in a corrugated-iron hut at Johannesburg ten years ago . . . but the heart of the Empire is set on ballot-boxes and small lies."

The latter is still true, but not so much as it was, and perhaps the false shepherds are not followed so eagerly, for there be they who have come out of great tribulation. Yet it is more than useful to us all to see how the Great British Empire, with a big "E" and God Save the King, and the great, hard world, struck the man of imagination forty years ago. You see it in *Letters of Travel*.

*On One Side Only* is a sketch of the internal climatic conditions in the United States (it was written in 1892) which explains President Roosevelt of today and all his troubles.

### *Kipling and France*

The first serious indication that Kipling had taken France to his heart almost as deeply as he had the Empire and the folk of the Five Nations and the Seven Seas was when in 1913 *France* appeared. Terribly prophetic did it prove in August 1914, and the years after, as it began with a separate italicized preface thus :

*Broke to every known mis-chance, lifted over all  
By the light sane joy of life, the buckler of the Gaul ;  
Furious in luxury, merciless in toil,  
Terrible with strength that draws from her tireless soil ;*

*France beloved of every soul, that loves its fellow-kind !*

This also ends the lay.

And then the opening verse, so true in the light of the then hidden drama :

Ere our birth (rememberest Thou) side by side we lay  
Fretting, in the womb of Rome, to begin our fray.  
Ere men knew our tongues apart, our one task was known—  
Each to mould the other's fate as he wrought his own.  
To this end we stirred mankind till all Earth was ours,  
Till our world-end strifes begat, wayside thrones and  
Powers.

Then of the carrying out of the cruel French sentence :

Pardoning old necessities, no pardon can efface—  
That undying sin we shared in Rouen market-place.

That was before the Germans shot Edith Cavell as a lesson in modern "ruth"—and here the final prophecy :

We who swept each other's coast, sacked each other's  
home,  
Since the sword of Brennus clashed on the scales at  
Rome,  
Listen, count, and close again, wheeling girth to girth  
In the linked and steadfast guard, set for peace on earth !

This was in 1913 !

Alas, that the peace could not have been kept, or that we two can barely keep it now. But even if prophecy fails in this count, the admiration and affection he bore is not the less forcibly expressed in the verses.

Though Kipling "discovered" France as a theme for story-painting comparatively late in his working-days, when he did he mastered, in that manner all his own, the charm of many phases of French life, and he understands the old smuggling liaison, "Aurettes and Lees like as two peas". He had, indeed, something of it in *A Priest in Spite of Himself*,<sup>1</sup> when he introduces Talleyrand in the United States. Long before he had taken to writing of France, the French had taken him to their hearts for his art's sake, and his work was as much admired in France as in the Empire and in the States, and many brilliant tributes have been written during the last thirty years. At his death a new chorus of sorrow and praise broke forth. Two extracts from the *Mercure de France* will help here to remind young England of what their neighbours thought. That journal, in its editorial, said, playing on *The Light that Failed* :

*"C'est une lumière universelle qui s'est éteinte le 18 janvier ; car Kipling n'était pas seulement la voix même de la 'Greater Britain', il était une des plus hautes consciences du monde. C'est la première*

<sup>1</sup> *Rewards and Fairies.*

*voix depuis Shakespeare, qu'un auteur de génie spécifiquement anglais, plus anglais que les autres écrivains de son temps, se trouve incarner aussi puissamment l'âme éternelle de l'humanité tout entière."*

And that is a pretty strong tribute from across the water.

M. René Lalou, long a Kipling "fan", concludes an article in the same issue of the *Mercure* thus :

*"C'est pourtant comme un témoin que Rudyard Kipling demeure parmi nous, qu'il vivra lors que nous aurons disparu. Car il aura été, au sens immortel du mot, un grand primitif, le révélateur de tous ce qui, dans la vie moderne, perpétue fièrement la jeunesse du monde."*

At the risk of enraging "*Messieurs Les Pantalons Amples*" we may quote also from Mdme Raoul Nicore, who wrote in English in the *Western Mail* (of Cardiff) : "If he is supposed to have made the English empire-minded, he has had the effect of making the French empire-minded too."

To M. André Maurois, a vice-president of the Kipling Society, who wrote *Les Silences du Colonel Bramble* from his conning-place as liaison officer with the British in the World War, Kipling and all that he stood for is an open book, and his appreciation has always been unbounded. In the *Spectator* of February 7, 1936, he wrote in French : "*O Kipling, chère à toute âme éprise à heroism, et de dure vérité. . .*" And he closed with : "*Longtemps encore, parce que les jeunes hommes, chez toi comme chez nous, le liront, s'accomplira dans les âmes des hommes Le Miracle de Rudyard Kipling.*"<sup>1</sup> We may feel that no tribute could have pleased Kipling more, for to stimulate and cheer youth was one of his greatest missions.

Since Kipling came to the fullness of his love of the French late in life the stories and verse are not very numerous. In the study of his later works, the verses *The Curé*, the stories *The Miracle of St. Jubanus* and *The Bull That Thought* are dealt with, and perhaps best of all in colour is *Teem*, the truffle-dog referred to in Chapter XIII and the sheep-dog M. le Vicomte Bouvier de Brie . . . "What, Brie?" "Yes, Brie!" "Where the little cheeses come from?" "*Oui ! Oui ! Oui !*" has a delightful French tone.

In 1933 was published his *Souvenirs of France*, and in this he speaks of his early days and of the four studies in the method of Victor Hugo, which have been referred to in the paragraphs on his metre. Of these he writes :

"At that time—'83 to '88—the French Press was not nationally enamoured of England. I answered some of

<sup>1</sup> On February 2, 1936, *Flandres Liberal* produced in French his *La France en Guerre*, and on January 31, 1936, *La France* appeared in *L'Écho de Londres*.



their criticisms by what I then conceived to be parodies of Victor Hugo's more extravagant prose. The peace of Europe, however, was not seriously endangered by these exercises ; my illustrious contemporaries must have known that newspapers have to be filled daily. '*Oh, demain c'est la grand chose ! De quoi demain sera-t-il fait ?*' (Victor Hugo)."

Kipling realized, at any rate later, that whenever the French newspapers feel dull a little John Bull-baiting was good fun. Indeed, it was a rather fiercer fit than usual after the waning of the honeymoon of the Crimea that gave birth to the great British Volunteer movement of 1859 and the vast chain of forts round the land sites of Plymouth and Portsmouth. That the same should have happened after our prolonged partnership of the World War is one of those feminine Gallic phenomena that no man can understand. Happily the hearts of the French people did not follow their Press and their Pertinax. The Victor Hugo parodies he refers to are no real part of "Kipling and France". No envenomed gentleman writing for his supper can break those four years of intimate camaraderie and sacrifice. Yet it was a pity, and it might have helped if Kipling had found words to put a stop to it. For John Bull was undoubtedly somewhat saddened. He had thought better of the girl.

In *A Book of Words* are various articles of understanding : *The Virtue of France, A Thesis, A Return to Civilization, The Trees and the Wall and The Indian Troops in France.*

There appeared in the *Figaro*, September 12, 1904, a letter in French from Rudyard Kipling to M. d'Humières, congratulating him on his work *L'Ile et l'Empire* :

"*Je lui dois de véritables joies et je vous en remercie très particulièrement. Il y a peu de choses plus intéressantes que de voir son propre pays du dehors, et des yeux aussi pénétrants (et aussi indulgents) que les vôtres font de cet intérêt un plaisir des plus vifs.*

"*Vos commentaires sur l'armée me paraissent fort justes.*

"*Vos études de l'Inde m'ont été un pur ravissement, en particulier celle sur le Radjputana où j'errai naguère quand j'étais jeune, à travers Chitore, Jeypore, et tant d'autres.*

"*Croyez-moi, je tombe d'accord avec vous, de tout cœur, dans ce que vous dites du prix qu'il faut attacher à une bonne entente entre nos deux pays, et cela pas seulement pour le besoin d'aujourd'hui*

*mais pour l'espoir de demain ; les deux peuples, me semble-t-il, se complètent l'un l'autre en tempérament, et en destinée en logique et en fait. Et même en fut il autrement, il faut nous rappeler qu'il n'y a pas tant de liberté de resie dans l'Europe orientale pour que les deux messagères de l'affranchissement humain osent disputer ensemble. . . . Si nous querellons, qui en profitera ? Le moyen age armé à la moderne. En doutez vous ?*"<sup>1</sup>

Indeed a prophet in Israel. . . .

I wonder if that letter is remembered in France ! During the World War Kipling wrote three letters to M. André Chevrillon, all three published in *La Revue de Paris* on February 18, 1915. They were dated November 28 and December 15, 1915, and January 7, 1916. They appeared in French, but the English version below was re-translated by Rear-Admiral L. H. Chandler of the U.S. Navy, a great student of all Kipling's works. They therefore are not quite in the Kipling language, but are otherwise faithfully done into English. Some extracts are worth examining.

This, the first letter, November 28, 1915, rehearses what was faithfully and possibly accurately believed by many in England :

"Now permit me to present to you other thoughts that have come to me while observing the public events of the last two months. The campaign for conscription has forced the different members of the pacifist societies to reveal themselves. The day will soon come when the people will commence to ask how many of them are paid by Germany. Then, that cry once launched, *you will hear some cheers*. Those who have lost or given their friends or parents will awake to the idea that there are traitors of all degrees in the society of their country."<sup>2</sup>

"As for conscription : inasmuch as all soldiers who have ever suffered from cold, wet or fatigue are fervent advocates of obligatory service, and inasmuch as their wives and their parents do not see the least reason—from their point of view—why the children of others should remain quietly at Home, public sentiment in England is almost entirely in favour of conscription. Some Trade Unions are beginning to ponder the matter seriously."<sup>3</sup> . . . We see already born

<sup>1</sup> And now even more true in the thirty-odd years after.

<sup>2</sup> Since *Mein Kampf* urges the preparation of ground by such means, this suspicion unfortunately stultifies genuine endeavour for a *rapprochement*. The well is tainted.

<sup>3</sup> Note how, as in 1936, the trade union fundamental common sense is once more to the fore, and teaching the Labour leaders.

a new Aristocracy—of blood—entirely democratic, which includes all persons of every class whose parents have been killed. . . .”

So much for his limelight on England. Now for something amusing :

“I have recently visited a number of your [viz. the Allied] vessels, and I have noticed the curious reappearance of men and ideas and exploits that I thought vanished for ever with our lesser wars—Jean Bart, Duguay-Trouin, Dupleix and all the rest of our brave phantoms—in very substantial form ; when we meet again, I will give you the story (which I cannot confide to paper) of a certain defiance which one of your naval officers, commanding one of your submarines that was working with ours, hurled at the Island of Heligoland itself. He was passing by the landing-place on that island and—profited by the occasion while his English comrades listened with respectful admiration ; up to that moment the English Navy had been looked upon as easily first in the matter of profanity.”

In the second letter, a few weeks later, he treats of the strange way of the English and their Bronze Age taint :

“There remain at present in our village only six young men who have not enlisted. Our village says nothing of the one hundred and fifty who have gone, and whose names are duly posted on our church door—the names of those who have been killed enclosed in a little black square. All the conversation turns on the shame and wickedness of the six black sheep, and of the punishment they will surely receive when their comrades come home. Our rector is of unsettled mind, and unhappy ; on the question of enforced service he is still a ‘politician’.

“. . . Germany exploits every psychological factor that she is capable of understanding, and her Press is busy as busy at the moment in impressing upon Europe the idea of an immovable and impregnable Michael installed over Europe and disdaining his petty adversaries.”

Kipling proceeds to discuss the future with some precision, remarks that the German ruler is now entering on his “Hundred Days”, and tries to imagine the post-War state of the world, as well he might. He has no illusion as to the Bosche nature, which he obviously likens to that of “Adamzad, the bear that walked like a man”.

In the third letter of January 7, 1916, the English Conscriptio Bill has just appeared. He is moved to mirth at the idea of employing the conscientious objectors to clean latrines, carry bundles and remove the filth of the camp ("Is that what *you* did in the War, Daddy?"). Already our little world makes a distinction between those who enlisted voluntarily and those of 1915 whom it was necessary to draft. He has an amusing story of a Canadian Irish Protestant Home-ruler whom he saw in hospital. This man

"desired Home Rule passionately, considered that it was the only way of destroying the power of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland. . . . There was a little French-Canadian, tawny and leathery. He knew nothing, but he was your Midi-Incarnate. He had come to kill the Bosches 'in the cause of France', and he pronounced that word with a rolling of the *rrr*."

The letters are peculiarly topical, but full of emphatic and expressive logic such as one would expect from so keen a patriot and so intimate an observer.

But in 1933 the *Daily Telegraph* published four letters, *Souvenirs of France*—entirely captivating memories of sojourns there, commencing with his boyhood and ending with a visit to Clemenceau not long before the ringing to evensong of the Tiger. Clemenceau had been to India, where, indeed, I, *moi qui parle*, saw him. He had malaria and told Kipling that the doctors dosed him out of bottles of the

" . . . same pattern as my great-great-grandmother used. They said if I went north by train I should die. I said then, 'I will go north, as, if necessary, I will die in your accursed trains'—but you see I lived."

"That was because of the bottles," I ventured.

"It was not. It was because I was so angry with the bottles." . . .

"There was the English handshake, and the accolade, as if it had been in the office of *L'Homme Enchaîné* a thousand years ago. And these are some of the reasons why I love France.

"R. K."

Kipling and the "Tiger" may well serve as the finale of this *resumé* of his relations with La Belle France.

## CHAPTER XVI

### KIPLING AND AMERICA

Kipling and America—Laughton O. Zigler—*An Habitation Enforced—The White Man's Burden.*

#### *Kipling and America*

By America one means, after our slovenly and superior Anglo-Saxondom, the United States, where the superior and arrogant instincts are equally dominant—however hyphenated the modern ethnology may be. And Rudyard Kipling belongs as much to the United States, in their opinion, as we know he is deep in our Anglo-Irish bone. The claim of America is based on board and bed, since in 1892 he married Caroline Wolcott-Balesier, and lived in the United States for four years in a house misspelt Naulahka, rather than Naulakha<sup>1</sup> (Nine Lakhs) before, in 1896, he set off on his second world-travel, prior to his discovery of Sussex, the rich field of history and romance.

But his first grub-stake in the United States was in 1889, when he landed at San Francisco on his way home from India, and he was made an honorary member of the Bohemian Club there. In return for the great hospitality shown him he wrote *The Owl*—that bird being the Club's "patron saint", which began :

Men said, but here I know they lied,  
The owl was of a silent clan,  
Whose voice upon the lone hillside  
Foreboded ill to mouse and man.  
A terror noiseless in the flight,  
A hook-nosed hoodlum of the night.

But I have found another breed,  
An owl of fine artistic feelings,  
A connoisseur of wine and weed  
Who flutters under frescoed ceilings.

A wanderer from East to West,  
A vagrant under many skies.  
How shall a roving rhymester best  
Requite, O owl, thy courtesies ?  
Accept in lieu of laboured stippling,  
A simple "Thank you" (signed) R. Kipling.

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<sup>1</sup> He has corrected the spelling in *Something of Myself*.

Early in his acquaintance with America his writings had their effect, for it is on record that in a certain club in New York, someone starting *Barrack-Room Ballads* turned all the citizens of Uncle Sam into cheering Englishmen for the moment.

But it was not always so, for when Kipling first had touch with the States he "got up" very badly against their want of laws of copyright (not introduced until 1891), whereby authors' works were pirated, altered, and rearranged without licence or apology or reward. He wrote some very fierce verses and letters on the subject. In *From Sea to Sea*, Chapter XX (omitted, however, from the collection bearing that name) appeared his *Curse on America*, written on finding the Sensible Publishing Company in Japan selling printed books by all authors.

He has since shown his admiration of the American in so many ways besides his marriage that America can but laugh over this memory of their literary piracy and his anger thereat.

"Then I cursed the Sensible Library, and the United States that bred it, very copiously in these terms and others unprintable.

"Because you steal the property of a man's hand, which is more his peculiar property than his pipe or his horse or his wife, and because you glory in your theft . . . you shall be cursed with this curse from Alaska to Florida and back again. [And here the curse ran to a tirade on the American use of the English tongue and the effect of the high palate on their womenfolk before tackling more serious matters.] You shall be governed by the Irishman and the German, the vendor of drink and the keeper of vile dens. . . . You shall be governed by laws that you cannot enforce, and sentiments that you cannot control, that the murderer may walk among you, a vision of delight to young women and the darling of old maids, while you are engaged in shooting the wrong man . . .

And since that was not enough, once again was the curse of provincialism called down on their states and territories. In fact, like the Jackdaw of Rheims, never was heard a more terrible curse. The penalty or the reward was to marry an American lady. . . . So he had obviously forgiven everybody. But it was not easy come by, for a request in 1889 to be allowed to use a club in Philadelphia where he might see some English papers was left unanswered with the comment, "Another damn' cheeky Englishman." In New York, he presented a letter of introduction from Edwin A. Abbey to

Harper & Bros., submitting some of his Indian tales, including the Mulvaney stories, but was told that their firm was "devoted to the publication of literature".

When the American Copyright Bill introducing international copyright appeared, he wrote some very pungent verses in the *Author* of July 1, 1891, poking fun at the diction, and even saying :

Your views on spelling "honour" match your notion of the same.

However, that all passed, and Kipling became a greater prophet in America than even in the British Empire. There was an amusing poem, still uncollected, which was published in the *Yale Literary Magazine* under the title *Mulvaney Regrets*, in which Kipling when vacating his house, Naulahka, at Brattleboro, refused an invitation to dinner from the Yale Literary Club.

Attind, ye lasses av' swate Parnasses,  
An' wipe me burning tears away.  
For I'm declinin' a chanst av dinin' at Yale on the  
fourteenth May.

They've made a club there an' staked out grub there,  
Wid plates, an' napkins in a joyous row,  
An' they'd think ut splendid if I attended,  
An' so would I—but I cannot go.

But I'm degressin', accept my blessin',  
An' remember what ould King Solomon said,  
That youth is ructious an' whisky fluxious,  
An' there's nothing certain but the mornin' head,

which was very good fun and much treasured. He was now able to fight his own battle with the dacoits, for when B. W. Dodge & Co. issued a pirate collection of several early stories under the title *Abast the Funnel*, Kipling immediately got his publishers—Doubleday, Page & Co.—to publish an authorized edition including the same stories for the sum of 19 cents, stating that many he would *not* have republished had the piracy not compelled him to do so. This explains the perpetuating of some stories which by general consent are somewhat below his usual standard. When in 1889 the manager of the S.W. Line in the United States of America named two of his stations "Rudyard" and "Kipling", Kipling wrote some amusing verses there—on *The Michigan Twins*.<sup>1</sup> One verse ran :

<sup>1</sup> Appeared in the *Book Advertiser* and other newspapers in the U.S.A. during March 1889.

Oh, tourist in the Pullman car  
 (By Cook's or Raymond's plan),  
 Forgive a parent's partial view—  
 But maybe you have children too,  
 So let me introduce to you  
 My sons in Michigan.

During those four years he was almost free of the American Press and contributed much thereto that has never seen the light of day in this country again. Outside the ranks of the Kipling collectors the American editions, many and various, pirated and otherwise, of his works, are little known, but they are very extensive. As related, that extraordinarily powerful story *The Record of Badalia Herodsfoot* first appeared in the *Detroit Free Press*, and a collection of his contributions to the American Press would be varied and more costly to acquire than a collection of all the postage-stamps of Uncle Sam. In 1899 he was back in the States and very ill in the Grenoble Hotel. By now he was a world personality, so much so that the Kaiser telegraphed his concern, and was responsible for evoking a typical Kipling ejaculation, quoted in Chapter III.

We have not many of his American writings in the books of collections published here, and such stories as there are rather minister to the English conception of Americanhood, and were calculated to educate the American who would live in England to English shibboleths. Among the short stories in our editions there are five, and they have also a charm other than the American side.

We have one of the most beautiful of all his stories of either England or young America—*An Habitation Enforced*,<sup>1</sup> with a woman of all the world's charm. There is one typical one, *An Error in the Fourth Dimension*,<sup>2</sup> and there is also *My Sunday at Home*,<sup>3</sup> *The Captive*,<sup>3</sup> *The Edge of the Evening*,<sup>4</sup> the last two being stories of Mr. Laughton O. Zigler, gun crank and inventor.

### *Laughton O. Zigler*

*The Captive* is a delightful story of the Boer War, but the leading figure is one Laughton O. Zigler, whom the teller of the story finds kicking his heels at a prisoners-of-war bathing-pool on the Simonstown shore. It is quoted in Chapter V.

“At the edge of the beach, cross-legged, undressed to his sky-blue Army shirt, sat a lean ginger-haired man on

<sup>1</sup> *Actions and Reactions.*

<sup>2</sup> *The Day's Work.*

<sup>3</sup> *Traffics and Discoveries.*

<sup>4</sup> *A Diversity of Creatures.*



guard over a dozen heaps of clothing. His eyes followed the incoming Atlantic boat.

"'Excuse me, Mister,' he said without turning (and the speech betrayed his nationality), 'could you mind keeping away from these garments? I've been elected janitor—on the Dutch vote.' . . .

"'Have you any use for papers?' said the visitor.

"'Have I any use? Why, that's the New York post-mark! Give me the back of *Harpers* and *M'Clures*, and I'm in touch with God's Country again! Did you know how I was aching for the papers?' . . . He extended his blue-tanned hand with that air of Oriental spaciousness which distinguishes the native-born American. . . .

"'My name's Zigler . . . Laughton O. Zigler. An American? If Ohio's still in the Union, I am, Sir . . . I don't tag after our Consul when he comes around, expecting the American Eagle to lift me out of this by the slack of my pants. No, Sir!'"

You see Mr. Zigler owned the Laughton-Zigler automatic two-inch field gun with self-feeding hopper, etc., which no one but the Boers seemed interested in. Kipling offers tobacco. "I thank you, but I don't use any tobacco you'd be likely to carry. . . . Bull Durham? *Bull Durham!* I take it all back, every last word. If ever you strike Akron, Ohio," etc. Mr. Zigler had been having great fun with a commando harrying those heavy and slow British columns which at one time tramped the veldt before the light mounted columns were organized or the new mounted troops trained, and until captured he and a gunner one Captain Mankeltow had been on friendly shelling terms. If you'd ever tried to ginger up Settle's Circus or Parson's Pantomime, or save the Exhibition from Delarey, you'd know how good the descriptions in the American metaphor are as told by Laughton O.

"'Well, Sir, we struck the General on his beat. . . . Vrelegen it was . . . and our crowd opened with the usual compliments at two thousand yards. Van Zyl shook himself into his greasy old saddle and says, 'Now we shall be quite happy, Mr. Zigler. No more trekking. Joost twelve miles a day till the apricots are ripe.' " " "

However, the end of it was that that commando and Mr. Zigler found themselves eventually in the soup, as do all sooner or later who poke fun at John Bull. Captain Mankeltow and the British gunners were very good to Zigler when they found he was not a deserter, and admired his gun, and he and

Mankeltow became friends for life. But the chaff was heavy on him at times, and that had hurt him. Zigler is aching to know what his gun has really done.

"How did it feel at your end of the game? What's my gun done anyway?"

"I hate to disappoint you," says Captain Mankeltow, "because I know how you feel as an inventor. . . . The honest truth is that you've wounded about ten of us one way or another, killed two battery horses and four mules, and . . . oh yes, you've bagged five Kaffirs. But buck up," he says, "we've all had mighty close calls," shaves, he called them, I remember. 'Look at my pants.' They were repaired right across the seat with Minneapolis flour-bagging. I could see the stencil."

But Commandant Adrian van Zyl was also prisoner, and the General talked with him. The General called him "Adrian old man", and listened to his home truths. "Quite right, Adrian," says the General, "but you must believe your Bible."

"Hooh," says Adrian. . . . 'I've never known a Dutchman a professing Atheist, but some few have been rather active Agnostics since the British sat down in Pretoria. Old van Zyl . . . he told me . . . had soured on religion after Bloemfontein surrendered. He was a Free Stater for one thing.'

"He that believeth," says the General, 'shall not make haste. That's in Isaiah. We believe we're going to win and so we don't make haste. . . . It's just this way, Mr. Zigler,' he says, 'our people are brim-full of patriotism, but they've been born and brought up between houses, and England ain't big enough to train 'em. . . . We have to train our men to shoot and ride. I allow six months for it. Many column commanders . . . think that if they have men and horses and guns they can take tea with the Boers. It's generally the other way about, ain't it, Mr. Zigler?' . . .

"Was there anything wrong with the men who upset van Bester's apple-cart, when he was trying to cross the line to join Piper with those horses he'd stole from Gabbitas?"

"No, Generaal," says van Zyl. 'Your man got the horses back and eleven dead; and van Besters, he ran to Delarey in his shirt. They was very good, these men. They shoot hard.'"

Which once more shows those who know how much Kipling knew always of the heart of things.

And so it runs on, full of good light on the Boer question, full of better light still for the young journalist who likes to think that the British Army never knew its job, and it ends with a rebuff to Laughton O., for he meets a Kentucky man who refuses to shake hands :

“ ‘I’m not knowing any man that fights for a Tammany Dutchman. But I presoom you’ve been well paid, you damn’ gun-running Yank.’ ”

Van Zyl tried to explain, but the American could not have that.

“ ‘Don’t you waste your breath, Mr. van Zyl. I know this breed. The South’s full of them. . . . Look at here, you Yank. . . . What *you’ve* done is to go back on the White Man in six places at once . . . two hemispheres and four continents. . . . You know right well that if you’d been caught at this game in our country, you’d have been jiggling in the bight of a lariat.’ ”

Laughton O. had not looked at it in that light, and when the other man tossed him half a crown he wept salt tears. His parting shot to the Englishman, however, is that “if you want to realize your assets, you should lease the whole proposition to America for ninety-nine years” ; and perhaps he was right.

But *The Captive* is but a prelude to a far finer idea—*The Edge of the Evening*, when Zigler and Mankeltow appear again ; and into a characteristic sketch—and presumably an accurate one—of American plutocrats Kipling must weave all his best Sussex secrets. It has a drama, too, of German doings before the World War, and may well be read now, for learning and instruction once more, as well as for sheer joy of the story and its setting. It is in 1913—that year of prosperity unimaginable to the present world—and all England was enjoying its summer of sport, when the unemployment problem was the smallest for years and a third in numbers of today. The only cloud to those who knew was the German Army and Navy drinking to *Der Tag*, the day when Britain and all her lands be humbled in the dust. But the story begins in glorious Sussex, with America disporting therein, and we do not see the cloud crossing the sun for a while, the powder is hidden by the jam. Thus the gambit.

“ ‘Hi ! Hi ! Hold your horses ! Stop ! . . . Well ! Well !’ A lean man in a sable-lined overcoat leaped from a private car and barred my way up Pall Mall. ‘You don’t know me ? You’re excusable. I wasn’t wearing much of anything last time we met. . . . in South Africa.’ ”

"'. . . Why, it's Zigler. . . . Laughton O. Zigler !' I cried. 'Well, I *am* glad to see you.'"

Into Zigler's car he must get, to be driven to what the latter calls the Army and Navy Co-operative Supply Association Limited, Victoria Street, Westminster.

"He settled himself on the deep dove-coloured pneumatic cushions, and his smile was like the turning on of all the electrics. His teeth were whiter than the ivory fittings, he smelled of rare soap and cigarettes . . . such cigarettes as he handed me from a golden box with an automatic lighter. On my side of the car was a gold-mounted mirror, card- and toilette-case . . . I looked at him inquiringly.

"'Yes, two years after I quit the Cape. She's not an Ohio girl though. . . . She's at our little place in the country. . . . We'll go there as soon as you're through with your grocery list. Engagements ? . . . You are the captive of my bow and spear now.'

"'I surrender,' I said meekly. 'Did the Zigler automatic gun do all this ?' I pointed to the car fittings.

"'Psha ! Think of your remembering that ! Well, no. . . . Excuse me !' He bared his head as we passed the statue of the Great Queen outside Buckingham Palace.

"'A very great Lady ! I have enjoyed her hospitality. . . . I represent the business end of the American Invasion. Not the blame cars themselves—I would not be found dead in one—but the tools that make 'em. I am the Zigler Higher-speed Tool and Lathe Trust. The Trust, sir, is entirely my own . . . in my own inventions. I am the Renzalaer ten-cylinder aerial . . . the lightest aeroplane engine on the market . . . one price, one power, one guarantee. . . . I am the Orlebar Paper-pelt, Pulp-panel Company for aeroplane bodies ; I am the Rush-Silencer for military aeroplanes . . . absolutely silent . . . !'"

And then Laughton O. drives him to his place deep in Sussex, not far from the Downs, and for a while Kipling pours out colour from his other colour-box :

"We walked perhaps half a mile, across timber-dotted turf, past a lake, entered a dark rhododendron-planted wood, ticking with the noise of pheasants' feet, and came out suddenly where five rides met, at a small classic temple between lichened stucco statues, which faced a circle of turf several acres in extent. Irish yews, of a size that I had never seen before. . . .

"‘I hired this off my Lord Marshalton,’ who, he explained, was none other than his old friend Captain Mankeltow of the Royal Artillery—‘Old Man Mankeltow’ of the artillery duel on the far-away veldt, whose family portraits always look at Zigler ‘as if I’d blown in from the gutter’.

"He guided me, hand on shoulder, into a babble of high-pitched talk and laughter that filled a vast drawing-room. He introduced me as the founder of the family fortunes to a little lithe, dark-eyed woman whose speech and greeting were of the soft-lipped South. She in turn presented me to her mother, a black-browed, snowy-haired old lady with a cap of priceless Venetian point, hands that must have held many hearts in their time, and a dignity as unquestioned and unquestioning as an Empress. She was indeed a Burton of Savannah, who, on their own ground, outrank the Lees of Virginia. The rest of the company came from Buffalo, Cincinnati, Cleveland and Chicago, with here and there a softening Southern strain. A party of young folk popped corn beneath a mantelpiece surmounted by a Gainsborough. Two portly men . . . discussed the terms of some contract. A knot of matrons talked servants’-Irish versus German across the grand piano. A youth ravaged an old bookcase, while beside him a tall girl stared at the portrait of a woman of many loves dead three hundred years . . . half a dozen girls examined the tables that held the decorations. . . . English and foreign of the late Lord Marshalton.

"‘See heah ! Would this be the Ordeh of the Gyartah ?’

"‘I presoom likely. No ! The Garter has “Honey swore”. . . I know that much. This is “Tria Juncta” something.’

"‘Oh, what is that cunning little copper cross with “For Valurr” ?’ a third cried.

Good fun poking at a new age, and folk trying to understand a new one. Then at dinner :

"I had the privilege of taking Mrs. Burton into dinner, and was rewarded with an entirely new, and, to me, rather a shocking, view of Abraham Lincoln, who she said had wasted the heritage of his land by blood and fire, and surrendered the remnant to aliens. ‘My brother, suh,’ she said, ‘fell at Gettysburg in order that Armenians should colonize New England today. If I took any interest in any dam-Yankee outside of my son-in-law Laughton

yondah, I should say that my brother's death had been amply avenged.' The man at her right took up the challenge and the war spread. Her eyes twinkled at the flames she had lit."

A little later after dinner Zigler talks of a party he had had with Lord Marshalton, *né* Mankeltow, Lundie the law lord whom Kipling students have met in *The Puzzler*, and Walen, a military pressman, and Zigler said: "Mother's right. Lincoln killed us. From the highest motives . . . but he killed us. Oh, say ! That reminds me. 'J'ever kill a man from the highest motives?"

And then comes the story . . . it was in 1913 . . . after summer dinner . . . he and his guest were about, when down on the grass theatre lands an aeroplane, without noise. Two men jump out and fuss with the engines, and Zigler thought the British Flying Corps must have got on to his Rush-Silencer at last. Zigler came from the shadow of a yew tree :

" " "Can I be of any service?" Well, sir, from there on, the situation developed like a motion-picture in Hell. The man on the nigh side of the machine whirls round, pulls his gun and fires into Mankeltow's face. I laid him out with my cleek automatically. . . . The man on the far side of the machine starts to run. Lundie, down the ride, or it might have been Walen, shouts, "What's happened?" Mankeltow says, "Collar that chap."

" "The second man runs ring-a-ring-a-roses round the machine, one hand reaching blindly behind him. Mankeltow heads him off to me. He breaks blind for Walen and Lundie who are runnin' up the ride. There's some sort of a mix-up among 'em, which it's too dark to see, and a thud. Walen says, "Oh, well collared !" . . . Mankeltow runs up to 'em still rubbing his neck, and says, "He didn't fire at me. It was the other chap. Where is he?"

" " "I've stretched him alongside his machine," I says.

" " "Are they poachers?" says Lundie.

" " "No. Airmen. I can't make it out." " "

Anyway, both were dead. The fat one who could not draw his gun from his back pocket had had his neck broken by the fall. Zigler's cleek had done in the other. "She is Renzalaer Continental," explains Zigler of the machine; "my engines and my Rush-silencer."

Walen, the know-all pressman, whistles. "Here, let me look," he says, and grabs the torch. She was well equipped.

"‘We gathered up an armful of cameras an’ maps an’ notebooks an’ an album of mounted photographs.’”

These they examine while Lundie spreads a handkerchief over the dead faces.

"‘Now we’ll go into the evidence. . . .’J’ever see a bird’s-eye telephoto-survey of England for military purposes? It’s interesting, but indecent. . . . None of those close-range panoramas of forts could have been taken without my Silencer.’”

Then they hold, as it were, an inquest, and an inquiry. Lundie thinks they might get off on the murder charge, but it would be a nuisance, and it might produce European complications. Mankeltow is sorry for the two Bosches, but Zigler points out they’d have shot them both if it hadn’t been for luck. But what to do with the corpses and the ’plane of the two intelligence agents? They decide to restart the machine with the Rush-Silencers, put the corpses back into the ’plane and send her off to fall into the Channel, committing their bodies to the deep, and Zigler remarks: “But, say! Ain’t life in England interesting?” And that is the end of a really fine story—America, Sussex, and the Bosche all intertwining, a warning for all time.

One more American story for its wonder must be given at length, and its charm of old England.

### *An Habitation Enforced*

*An Habitation Enforced*<sup>1</sup> is quite the most charming story of England *qua* England as well as a study of American character, and it begins with young George Chapin, ordered by his doctor to leave all work for two years, believing that his death-warrant has been signed, though Sophie his wife, one of the world’s dears, assures him that it is not so. They wander seawards, and to reinforce his doctor’s orders a mere talk with a chance-met railway magnate threatens the old symptoms of breakdown. He must give way, and Sophie suggests a honeymoon, saying that

“‘in all the six years we’ve been married, you’ve never told me what you meant to do with your life. . . . How much have you?’”

“‘Between four and five million. But it isn’t the money. It’s the principle’”—that principle of work all day and every day to make more and swallow more businesses.

“‘Well, I suppose I married you for some sort of ideal,’ she answered.”

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<sup>1</sup> *Actions and Reactions.*

Eventually they meet a knowledgeable Englishwoman who insists on their knowing "their own people", and sends them to Rocketts, the farm of one Cloke, in the Southern counties. For the glory of England we must quote, and we see how the derelict American millionaires found their own ancestry and their own clay.

"Rocketts they found after some hours, four miles from a station, and so far as they could judge in the bumpy darkness, twice as many from a road. . . . Mr. and Mrs. Cloke, at the open door of a deep stone-floored kitchen, made them slowly welcome. They lay in an attic beneath a wavy, white-washed ceiling, and because it rained, a wood fire was made in an iron basket in a brick hearth, and they fell asleep to the chirping of mice and the whimper of flames.

"When they woke it was a fair day, full of the noises of birds, the smell of box, lavender, and fried bacon, mixed with an elemental smell they had never met before."

Sophie is delighted if perplexed ; he asks where the nearest telegraph office is. And good it is that those of the motor, wireless, and telephone days should realize that these had not yet covered the face of the earth. Wise Sophie remarks callously, "Who cares ?"

They explore the wild country that can even now be found a hundred miles from London, or less—wild beyond belief to those who think England can be nothing but a cared-for garden.

They run into the overgrown rhododendron drive of an old manor-house, "a colonial house", Sophie calls it, "a Georgian house of dark-bluish brick, with a shell-shaped fan-light over its pillared door"; and Sophie cries as she curtsies to the house, "George, this is history I can understand. *We* began here." She curtsies again. Dog Rambler opens the door, having come over from Rocketts Farm to cadge milk, and an ancient of days, the caretaker, is with them.

In wild delight they explore the derelict house, and the ancient explains : "It is with housen as with teeth, let 'em go too far and there's nothing *to* be done."

But the American, his mind bent on home-coming, amid American mines and millions, with an acquired and semi-fictitious knowledge of Chippendale and Hepplewhite, determines to acquire it. The Clokes tell them the story of Friar's Pardon, and the fight the dying family had to keep it up. Excitedly they collect and store the tales of the family and its branches. Sophie, getting over to the cottage of old



Iggulden the ancient one day, finds him dead in his chair, and sits by him till someone comes, and meets the quaint vicar, who becomes human ; Sophie is a Unitarian. Then a woman comes, quite unconcerned because this clock had stopped ticking, as it was overdue to do : "Yiss, ma'am, they come down like ellum branches in still weather." The ancient's son turns up, pleased that she had been there. He was back from America, from Veering Hollow in Connecticut. Sophie is excited. "Why, all my mother's people come from Veering Hollow. There must be some there still—Lashmars. Did you ever hear of them?" The man apparently had heard of them.

A heavy-footed lady strides into the Clokes', back from the otter-hunt, tells Sophie she did a fine thing sitting by the old man, and said how had there been anyone at Pardons he would never have been left like that.

"A cup of tea, Mrs. Cloke, and I can eat one of your sandwiches."

"Yes, my lady !"

George behind the curtain has laughed at the mud-splashed dame, who is Lady Conant, wife of Sir Walter Conant, Bt.—"a large landowner in the neighbourhood, and if not God, at least His Visible Providence".

Ere long Pardons belonged to the Americans. The purchase is not told even to the Clokes till 8 p.m. on Saturday, yet at church next morning, as they walk in, a Cloke appears on each side, and a verger, and they are pushed into the Pardons pew. To Sophie, to whom the countryside has been a mysterious attraction, there comes a new light.

"At the Litany George had had trouble with an unstable hassock, and drew the slip of carpet under the pew seat. Sophie pushed her end back also, and shut her eyes against a burning that felt like tears. There was her mother's name on the pew floor :

"ELLEN LASHMAR. ob. 1796, *aetat.* 27.

As they left, a group of families opened to let them through. Iggulden's son lifts his hat.

"Your people," said the clear voice of Lady Conant in her ear."

They go to the Conants' for lunch, and the vicar and Sir Walter call George "Chapin" . . . Sophie remembers how in the other world even the wives called their husbands "Mister", and not a word does she, with the reviving Sussex instinct, say

of the name of Lashmar. No need to go on. Oh, read it word by word, you who love Sussex and old England. Nothing so deeply redolent of this "Pool in a Swan's Nest" has he written, and nothing perhaps so intimate in his understanding of the exiled heart in the Saxon-America. How Pardons is restored—not lavishly and ostentatiously—and how George is curbed in excess by Sophie, and how they are seised of the countryside and people, must be read and re-read.

But Sophie was tiring somewhat with all the moving in, and one day she walks over to Clokes' and tells Mrs. Cloke of vague toothaches and the like and Mrs. Cloke asked some questions.

"How it came about Sophie never knew, but after a while, behold Mrs. Cloke's arm about her waist, and her head on that deep bosom behind the shut kitchen door. 'My dear ! My dear ! An' d'you mean to tell me you never suspicioned ? Why . . . why . . . where *was* you ever taught anything at all ? Of *course* it is . . . and to see you building your nest so busy . . . pianos and books . . . and never thinking of a nursery !'

"'No more I did.' Sophie sat bolt upright, and began to laugh . . . and then Mrs. Cloke said, '*What* did you say about my Mary's doings ? . . . If any of the girls thinks to be'ave arbitrary now, I'll . . . But they won't, my dear . . . be sure you'll 'ave no trouble.'

"When Sophie walked back across the fields, heaven and earth changed about her as on the day of old Iggulden's death. . . . She leaned against one of their new gates and looked over the lands for some other stay. 'Well,' she said resignedly, half aloud, 'we must try and make him feel that he isn't a third in our party,' and turning the corner that looked over Friar's Pardon, giddy, sick and faint . . . she went quickly into the hall and kissed either door-post, whispering : 'Be good to me. *You* know—You've never failed in your duty yet.' "

And so the inevitable months rolled on. George Chapin wanted to take her home to Baltimore. Sophie, in whose bones all the old Sussex sap stirred, would have none of it, and both were supremely happy, and it was all far more sacred and intimate than that, "I'm in for an infant, Jim !" with which moderns announce the supreme mystery and accomplishment. And Sophie knew that a son was expected of her, and by tradition Friar's Pardon threw sons. So all went well, as such things should, and Kipling tells it with old-world charm, of American Sophie who was Saxon to the bone.

"Friar's Pardon stood faithful to its tradition. At the appointed time was born, not the third party to whom Sophie meant to be so kind, but a godling . . . an enhancer of delights, a renewer of companionships and an interpreter of Destiny. This last George did not realize till he met Lady Conant striding through Dutton Shaw a few days after the event. . . . She felt largely in her leather-bound skirt and drew out a small silver mug. . . . The mug was worn and dented ; above the twined initials G. L. was the crest of a footless bird and the motto : 'Wayte awwhyte—wayte awwhyte'.

" 'That's the other end of the riddle,' Sophie whispered when he saw her that evening. 'Read her note, the English write beautiful notes. "The warmest welcome to your little man. I hope he will appreciate his native land now he has come to it. Though you have said nothing, we cannot, of course, look on him as a stranger, and so I am sending him the old Lashmar christening-mug. It has been with us since Gregory Lashmar, your great-grandmother's brother . . . ' "

"George stared at his wife.

" 'Go on,' she twinkled from the pillows. . . . "Sold his place to Walter's family. . . . I hope little George . . . Lashmar" He will be that too, won't he? "will live to see his grandchildren cut their teeth on his mug. Affectionately yours. Alice Conant.

" ' "P.S.—How quiet you've kept about it all !" ' ' "

That was why the county had taken them to itself. Everybody knew since Sophie had told old Iggulden's son by chance-like. The county had traced it for themselves, and the fact that the Chapins had not told, but, maybe, had come to Pardons for old sake's sake, clinched the matter, and Mrs. Cloke told them that all Lashmars were slow to fill their houses, she'd heard, and she let out that perhaps young Iggulden had told them, and that she'd heard that the American people at Veering Hollow were very obliging !

And the end of the Sussex tyranny was that Cloke said to George, who wanted to use larch on a foot-bridge :

" 'I've nothing against larch, *if* you want to make a temporary job of it. I ain't 'ere to tell you what isn't so . . . by the time young master's married it'll have to be done again. Now I've brought down a couple of as sweet six-by-eight oak timbers as ever we've drawn. . . . You've no call to regard my words . . . ' "

And oak it was.

And if ever you read a sweeter story or a closer study of English and American at their best, why . . . !

There are more stories of American folk. *My Sunday at Home*, when an American doctor gave an emetic to the wrong man on a Sunday train, and *An Error of the Fourth Dimension*, of Wilton Sargent, deep in millions made by his father, a railway magnate, settles in England and becomes more deeply English than the English, but suddenly wants to go to town to get a scarab to convince a Philistine. But these were before the days of good motors and good roads, and so he flags with a red flag from his private golf-course—actually flags—an express, the Induna, of the great Buchonian Line ! There is such a fuss of lawyers and summonses, etc., he is thought to be a lunatic, and lunacy doctors come to see him. He offers to buy the great Buchonian, which is worse and worse, yet Wilton Sargent cannot understand why he cannot square the trouble by seeing the president of the company. It is a long time before the company's lawyers realize that he *can* buy up the line, and for all his English is American.

“So you would have gone forty miles to town and back—to get a scarab ? How intensely American ! But you talk like an Englishman, Mr. Sargent. . . .”

“That is a fault that can be remedied. . . .”

And now Wilton Sargent once again charges down the Hudson to his business in a twelve-hundred-ton steam-yacht, at an average speed of seventeen knots an hour, and the barges can look after themselves.

*Pan in Vermont* is an amusing ballad of an American seed-and plant-seller, with dud goods, sweeping through the countryside in spring.

### *The White Man's Burden*

Those who could call down fire on Kipling for his jingoism are specially stirred to annoyance by *The White Man's Burden*, hurt in their pan-humanism to think that the savage and untutored need any rule or guidance. This, and the phrase “the lesser breeds without the law”, are anathema ; one writer even voices his feelings by exclaiming at the effect that such an expression must have made at some meeting of ambassadors and envoys in Britain, Coronation or the like. But “the lesser breeds without the law”, as he should have known, does not apply to such as they, but rather to such as rape and murder for a pastime, and other hystericals and savages.

*The White Man's Burden* originally appeared in *The Times*, with the sub-title *An Address to the United States*. The States, for the first time, in the Philippines, was taking over all responsibility—a responsibility without which the civilization of the world cannot be developed or backward races saved from exploitation by the “lesser breed” and those who are deficient in scruple. Kipling is obviously girding at the hostility too often visible in the Senate against Great Britain. It begins forcibly enough :

Take up the White Man's Burden—  
Send forth the best ye breed—  
Go bind your sons to exile  
To serve your captives' need ;  
To wait in heavy harness,  
On fluttered folk and wild—  
Your new-caught sullen peoples,  
Half-devil and half-child.

The United States followed the advice, for they sent the same class of men as we have sent to the Niger, and to rebuild India, and fight famine and fever. How good a job they made for years amid the sullen Filipinos only those behind the scenes know. Those who know why Katherine Mayo started on her Balaam mission there, and then, thinking the abuse of the English in the States for their turpitude in India might be based on equal wrong-headedness, sought truth in India itself, will realize what the ballad means :

Take up the White Man's Burden  
And reap his old reward :  
The blame of those ye better,  
The hate of those ye guard—  
The cry of hosts ye humour  
(Ah, slowly !) toward the light :—  
Why brought ye us from bondage,  
Our loved Egyptian night ?

In the years that the Philippines were recast, the administrators were subject to the constant abuse of their own countrymen. In India, the Bengal disease was commencing its futile, unreasoned course. The verses are another of those historic milestones erected to mark an epoch.

And if you still don't think that Kipling understood and loved the States, why, read in the files of the Press of July '18 what he said when he opened a Y.M.C.A. “inn” for the American troops in England. His first speech was to a large crowd of officers and men, who received him with a “tiger”, the second in the “inn” that he opened.

## CHAPTER XVII

### KIPLING AND THE WORLD WAR

The Horror and the Awakening—Songs of the Lesser Craft—*Grande Guerre* at Sea—The Years of War—*The Pleasure Cruise*—The Prose Subsidiaries.

#### *The Horror and the Awakening*

THAT Kipling was immensely stirred by the World War goes without saying. A man of his ardent patriotism, his immense understanding of the manly men and real women of his race and the world, would have his immediate reactions. Apart from his literary work he stood up very fully to all the activities that his profession and his status in popular affection offered him. He became, ere long, one with the Empire in the loss of his son with the Irish Guards in France; nay, indeed, one with the world that was once civilized. In his *History of the Irish Guards* he has said all that he could say of the troops and their trials in France. Otherwise his contribution to prose literature regarding the War was rather meagre. Mourning for ever, it seemed that he could not bring his pen of prose to move readily in so tragic a *milieu*. The immense opportunities that France, Mesopotamia, Palestine and Gallipoli would have offered him and his colour-box was hardly used.

Such stories as there are from his pen are mostly stories of side-issues and resulting emotions. They are intensely sympathetic, at times mystic, with that tendency to mysticism which we have already seen appearing in his latter-day work. Many of them are stories that will live, as will most of the War verse, topical and otherwise, some whimsical, some humorous.

When we turn to the said verse, however, the case is different. There is plenty of it, though even here it is, as a rule, to the queer side-issue that his fancy turns. There is nothing of the forceful description such as rings in *With the Main Guard*, nor anything in verse to remind us of *Snarleyow*, or *The Ballad of the Clamperdown*. The War verse that he has given us, however, is pregnant enough in its own way, and both the prose and verse are worthy of close study, while the latter presents a panorama of the years. Some are bitter enough, fresh from anvils hot with pain.

The stories are almost entirely collected in *Debits and Credits*, save that *A Diversity of Creatures*, mostly composed of

pre-War yarns and studies, closes with *Mary Postgate* and *Swept and Garnished*, both redolent of the horror that Britain felt at the bombing of the helpless, and at the atrocities in Belgium. Most of these, *pace* the apologists, have never been explained away, and today, with the more excessive ways of the Nazis, justify the saying of the man in the corner with the pipe: "The Bosche is always the Bosche"—a fact that his propagandists are always trying to blind us to, however so much his doings belie them.

That but means that the German—especially the Prussian spirit with its Tartar infiltration—is more ruthless, and perhaps faithless, than the majority of mankind.<sup>1</sup> The first tribute to the awful occasion came when Britain found herself in the midst of her peaceful, prosperous summer, with no bigger cloud on the horizon than the treachery of the Irishry and the problem of undermining the staunchness of Ulster. Then, as August Bank Holiday arrived, she suddenly found herself at war, fortunately with the Navy fully geared and the Army ready to the last button so far as the trivial role that the politicians anticipated was concerned. This is how he sings it in *The Covenant*:

We thought we ranked above the chance of ill.  
Others might fall, not we, for we were wise—  
Merchants in freedom. So, of our free-will,  
We let our servants drug our strength with lies.

To which the refrain should be, "Thank you, merry gentlemen" (of the Cabinet and pulpits; ay, and of the Commons).

England needed stirring as Scotland sprang to arms, and commercial England wondered what it was all about; and so there came hot-foot, as the Press told the first German gambit, from the Kipling pen, the following:

For all we have and are,  
For all our children's fate,  
Stand up and take the war,  
The Hun is at the gate!  
Our World has passed away,  
In wantonness o'erthrown.  
There is nothing left today,  
But steel and fire and stone!

And each verse ends with the glorious lines from the Book:

Though all we knew depart,  
The Old Commandments stand:—  
"In courage keep your heart  
In strength lift up your hand."

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<sup>1</sup> That Hitler has regenerated a broken Germany is now amply evident. The benevolence of his avowments clash amazingly with *Mein Kampf*. If he can turn the German race, the admirable German race, to ordinary human outlook, his services to mankind will be incalculable. A Germany of good will is what all the world wants.

And the last verse shouted forth the law and the prophets of the hour :

There is but one task for all . . .  
 One life for each to give.  
 What stands if Freedom fall ?  
 Who dies if England live ?

Then came the terrible stories from Belgium, and from them sprang *Swept and Garnished*. Be it remembered by those old enough and learnt by those too young, that prior to 1914 all civilized nations had very strong objections to bringing war home to women and children, and to the sick and aged. War was an affair of adult men, who might do what they liked to themselves in fair but brutal ways; but such things as expanding bullets were abjured, and even the Bosche himself had lent lip-service to such sentiments. But the World War has put an end to civilization and human ruth. So strongly do we expect poison gas and lethal bombs that we even teach our children of grim necessity how to escape from them, and take counsel together how if needs must we may blow other folks' golden-haired children and old women to pieces.

It is not good to think on this back-sliding from all principles of humanity, and so thought Kipling, and in *Swept and Garnished* he dwells on the enormity of things done to girls and children, and the old and the maimed. Frau Ebermann in her comfortable Berlin flat lay sick of influenza. She was very giddy and her head ached and her temperature was obviously up. While she lay waiting for her maid to return from the chemist with remedies,

"she resolved to shut hot-lidded eyes . . . but she saw a child, an untidy, thin-faced little girl of about ten, who must have strayed in from the adjoining flat."

She told the child to put a cloth tidy; but the child took no notice and only wandered round. Anna, who came back, declared there was no child.

"What news?" said Frau Ebermann drowsily. She had not been out that day.

"Another victory," said Anna. "Many more prisoners and guns." Frau Ebermann purred, one might almost say grunted, contentedly.

"If it pleased our dear God to take her to Himself . . . He should find all her belongings fit to meet His eye. 'Swept and garnished' . . . there they were. Five of them, two



little boys and three girls headed by the anxious-eyed ten-year-old she had seen before."

And the more she told them to go away the more they stayed, explaining how their people had said wait for them; that was away in Belgium, where Aunt Emmeline's house fell down. Frau Ebermann told them to go home.

"'H'sh, we *can't*,' whispered the eldest. 'There isn't anything left.'

"'All gone,' a boy echoed. . . .

'Uncle told me. Both cows too. And my own three ducks,' the boy on the girl's lap said sleepily."

They sat in a row on the Frau's sofa and smiled, and the more she said, "Go away," the more they smiled and said they must wait.

"'Where else shall we go now?' the elder girl demanded, turning to her little company. . . . 'We will go!' Then she said, 'You see, they are so little, they like to meet all the others.'

"'What others?' said Frau Ebermann.

"'The others—hundreds and hundreds, and thousands of thousands, of them.'

"'That is a lie. There cannot be a hundred even, much less a thousand,' cried Frau Ebermann.

"'So?' said the girl politely.

"'Yes. *I* tell you. . . . You should have been more careful. You should not have run to see the horses and guns passing . . . My son has written me so.'

"'But I never saw any at all,' a boy cried sorrowfully. 'Only one noise I heard. That was when Aunt Emmeline's house fell down.'

"'Thousands,' a boy repeated monotonously."

The boy burst into tears. The Frau exclaimed: "It is rude to cry where a poor lady is sick."

"Oh, but look, lady!" said the elder girl.

Frau Ebermann looked and saw!

When Anna ran in she found her mistress on the floor, cleaning the floor with the lace-cover from the radiator, because the floor was covered with the blood of the five children.

"Anna was to find them and give them cakes to stop the bleeding, while her mistress swept and garnished—that our dear Lord, when He came, might find everything as it should be."

And so does the master mingle pathos and satire in the days when humanity was shocked at outrage.

*Mary Postgate* came a little later, and it is a pathetic story of the old governess and her quondam pupil, now an ill-conditioned, arrogant "sub", being trained in the Flying Corps and expurgates it all as he crashes to his death at training. Mary and her employer, Miss Fowler, Wynn's aunt, sort out his belongings—uniform to the camp, clothes where they can be used, his own pet things and books to be burnt on a pyre of grief. "Postie", in dazed ritual, prepares the bonfire, and goes to the village for paraffin, chatting with the village nurse. There is a loud report, a shed subsides, and a child is torn to pieces, to die, drenched in blood, in the nurse's arms. Mary, her shoes soaked with blood, her face set, returns with the paraffin to the fire, and Miss Fowler tells her of the two aeroplanes that have passed overhead.

It is getting dusk as she sprinkles the sacrificial oil. As she lights the match that would burn her heart to ashes, she hears a groan from the shrubbery. She lights the pyre and sees a man sitting stiffly at the foot of one of the oaks, a broken branch across his lap, in a uniform something like Wynn's, with a close-cropped head. His lips move. There is no doubt as to his nationality, and in anger she strides back to the pyre, poker in hand, where Wynn's books blaze handsomely. Mary looks at the broken oak branches, and the helpless figure with horrible rolling head. She sees a revolver in his belt. She hates pistols; Wynn's lies upstairs. He has shown her how to use it, and she slips upstairs to get it. When she comes back the face tries to smile.

"*'Cassé, tout cassé,'* it whimpered.

"What do you say?" said Mary disgustedly. . . .

"*'Cassé,'* it repeated. *'Che me rends, le médecin! Toctor!'*

"*'Nein!'*" said she, bringing all her small German to bear with the big pistol. *'Ich haben der todt kinder gesehn.'*

"The head was still. Mary's hand dropped. . . . She returned to the destructor . . . and churned up Wynn's charring books with the poker. Again the head groaned for the doctor.

"Stop that!" said Mary, and stamped her foot. "Stop that, you bloody pagan!"

"The words came quite smoothly and naturally. They were Wynn's own words, and Wynn . . . for no consideration on earth, would have torn little Edna into those vividly coloured strips and strings.

Mary poked at the pyre, waiting for the pagan death-rattle, hoping it would come before tea, and her mind worked furiously.

“‘Stop it!’ Mary cried once more across the shadows.  
‘*Nein*, I tell you! *Ich haben der todt kinder gesehn.*’”

Mary waits in fierce rapture for the sound of the end. “Go on,” she murmurs half aloud. “That isn’t the end.” But it soon was, and Mary scandalizes the whole routine by having a hot bath before tea and then looking—poor Mary!—as Miss Fowler said, “quite handsome”, and her mind at rest.

Not a nice, kind story—but Mary, like the Black Tyrone, had “seen her dead”. It is a story of history, that will tell the world for ever something of what war brought even to Sussex lanes and may, alas, bring more terribly in the future in a world that cannot learn.<sup>1</sup>

*The Outlaws* is another verse of the early period, and voices the surprise at the contempt for the German treatment of the world :

They traded with the careless earth,  
And good return it gave ;  
Then plotted by their neighbours’ hearth  
The means to make him slave.

Then when the question began to be asked—not by the *embusqué*, for he was beyond shame, but by the men with family ties and responsibility—came *The Question*, and this is how Kipling puts it—that hard, hard question for the little pots :

If it be found, when the battle clears,  
Their death has set me free,  
Then how shall I live with myself through the years  
Which they have bought for me ?

*A Song in Storm* has something of philosophy and consolation for a world in agony. This is the first verse :

Be well assured that on our side  
The abiding oceans fight,  
Though headlong wind and heaping tide  
Make us their sport to-night.  
By force of weather not of war  
In jeopardy we steer.

And then the refrain that ends each verse :

Then welcome Fate’s discourtesy,  
Whereby it shall appear,  
How in all time of our distress,  
And our deliverance too,  
The game is more than the player of the game,  
And the ship is more than the crew.

<sup>1</sup> A reaction of Oliver Baldwin’s to this story has appeared since this was written. It has been considered in Chapter I.

And so he takes us on through the changing spirit and the temperament of the four years of trial, and very soon finds himself drawn to the Sea Service, especially the auxiliary Services, which furnish so much of the spirit that he loved to observe in the folk he delighted to honour.

### *Songs of the Lesser Craft*

The little craft, the craft of the deep-sea fishers and the coast-wise sailors, the city men turned Naval Volunteers, would, of course, as said, be the material in which Kipling's sympathies and art would revel. Hark to *The Lowestoft Boat* :

In Lowestoft a boat was laid,  
Mark well what I do say !  
And she was built for the herring trade,  
But she has gone a-rovin', a-rovin', a-rovin',  
The Lord knows where !

Her skipper was mate of a bucko ship.

Her mate was skipper of a chapel in Wales,  
And so he fights in topper and tails.

Her leading stoker is seventeen,  
So he don't know what the Judgments mean.

Her cook was chef in the Lost Dogs' Home,  
Mark well what I do say !  
And I'm sorry for Fritz when they all come  
A-rovin', a-rovin', and a-rovin' . . .

And from the crew, turn to the whole outfit of crew and boats.  
And hark to *Trawlers* :

Dawn off the Foreland . . . the young flood making  
Jumbled and short and steep—  
Black in the hollows and bright where it's breaking—  
Awkward water to sweep.

"Mines reported in the fairway  
Warn all traffic and detain.  
Sent up *Unity*, *Claribel*, *Assyrian*, *Stormcock*, and  
*Golden Gain*."

And from the dangerous, ever dangerous work, from Dover to Cape Helles. . . . In the *envoi* to *The Fringes of the Fleet* we have the little song of the submarines, which begins : "Farewell and adieu to you, Harwich Ladies", with its jingle :

We'll duck and we'll dive like little tin turtles,  
We'll duck and we'll dive underneath the North Seas,  
Until we strike something that doesn't expect us,  
From here to Cuxhaven it's go as you please !

As it also was with Fritz, as the searcher's grapplings raked his cowering back—as he too lay in wait for what “doesn't expect us”.

And if you would see, you young people of England, what manner of men your quiet fathers were, your fathers in business in the world's greatest seaport, why, *The Changelings* will tell you :

Or ever the battered liners sank  
With their passengers to the dark,  
I was head of a Walworth Bank  
And you were a grocer's clerk.

I was a dealer in stocks and shares,  
And you in butters, and teas,  
And we both abandoned our own affairs  
And took to the dreadful seas.

We saw more than the nights could hide—  
More than the waves could keep—  
And—certain faces over the side  
Which do not go from our sleep.

Now there is nothing—not even our rank—  
To witness what we have been ;  
And I am returned to my Walworth Bank  
And you to your margarine !

And that brings us back to the short story *Sea Constables*, a typical Kipling story, if any can be more typical than others. (Which, of course, they can.)

The story is told of a party of four such changelings, commanding, or otherwise commissioned, on coast patrols, out on every sort of private yacht :

They gave her Government coal to burn,  
And a Q.F. gun at bow and stern—

—who have gathered for a night off at their favourite restaurant in London town, out of uniform, middle-aged, well-fed men. The proprietor, *cher* Henri, ministers lovingly.

“‘We're weather-beaten mariners—though we don't look it, and we haven't eaten a Christian meal in months. Have you thought of that, Henri, *mon ami* ?’

“‘The menu I have compose it myself,’ Henri answered with the gravity of a high-priest.”

Henri murmurs, as he gives them the best bridal alcove : “There is nothing too good”—they, in their former incarnation, having been stockbrokers, opulent board directors, and the like.

The carrying voice of the foreign actress, hired by recruiting

authority, to sing *Sons of the Empire Go Forward* at the Palemseum, remarks audibly to her companion : "They ain't *alive* to the War yet. Now what's the matter with those four dubs yonder joining the British Army . . . or *doing* something?"

So our friends chuckle and begin to yarn, looking suspiciously at their foreign waiter, who turns out to be Henri's nephew, whose hand creaks corkily at the wrist. "Bethisy-sur-Oise," he explained. "My uncle, he buy me *all* the hand for Christmas. It is good to hold plates only." And then they settle down to coast-wise naval shop, and how they had followed a neutral with oil all round the coast. They had, several of them, met this particular neutral, a Yank, carrying oil and coal with all his papers in order. Maddingham in his own yacht *Hilarity* had followed him down the coast in bad weather. Before this the Yankee skipper, Uncle Newt they called him—"a small-boned man, with a grey beard, in a glengarry, and he picked his teeth a lot"—had exchanged words with him. He had said :

" "The last time I met you, Mister Maddingham, you were going to Carlsbad, and you told me all about your blood-pressures in the wagon-lit before we tossed for upper berth. Don't you think you're a little too old to buccaneer about the sea this way? . . ." Then I ordered him into port. He said : "S'pose I don't go?" I said : "Then I'll sink you. . . ." He didn't argue any more. He warned me I'd be hauled over the coals. . . ."

He was, and scolded by Admiralty and the neutral's lawyer, but nevertheless he followed the released Yank out, who said he was bound for Antigua, and steered the opposite way ! But *Hilarity* followed and found him at last at a suspicious and likely submarine rendezvous off the coast, Maddingham then mad with sciatica.

Then Maddingham opens fire all round at imaginary enemy submarines, and the neutral slips off, foiled. "You think you've got patriotism. All you've got is uric acid and rotten spite," shouts he, and makes off up the Irish Channel, and at last, in despair, puts into Cloone harbour, and sells his oil to the Admiralty. There he appeals to Maddingham to take him to a doctor as he's got bronchial pneumonia.

" "Why, if you leave me now, Mr. Maddingham, you condemn me to death just as surely as if you hanged me. . . ."

"I was perfectly polite. I said to him : "Try to be reasonable, sir, If you had got rid of your oil where it was

wanted, you'd have condemned lots of people to death just as surely as if you'd drowned 'em. . . ."

" "Show a little consideration," he said. "Your side's bound to win anyway. . . ."

"I said: 'This is business. I can do nothing for you.'"

" "Then I'm a dead man, Mr. Maddingham."

" "That's *your* business," I said. "Good afternoon," and I went out."

" 'And ?' said Winchmore, after a silence.

" 'He died ; I saw his flag half-masted next morning.' "

Like Mary Postgate, he had said : "Shut up, you bloody pagan." A neutral who supplied submarines was no fit subject for mercy.

Maddingham to Henri : " 'Has my car come, Henri ?'

" 'Yes, Sare Francis.' And before they went they drank.

" 'Here's luck,' said Maddingham. 'The usual, I suppose ?—Damnation to all neutrals !' "

To which the only comment we can make, lest we forget, is that aphorism of the French, "*À la guerre comme à la guerre.*"

The coast-wise work which got the food-ships into port, the destroyers constantly called out in all weathers, and, above all, that astounding Service the submarines, known then affectionately by their supermen as the "Trade", all appeal to Kipling and to us as more than worthy of anything he could sing of them. We may well glance therefore at their lays. First the *North Sea Patrol* ; and if you know the East Coast, you will glory in the opening line :

Where the East wind is brewed fresh and fresh every  
morning,

And the balmy night breezes blow straight from the Pole,  
I heard a Destroyer sing : "What an enjoyable life  
Does one lead on the North Sea Patrol !"

We warn from disaster the mercantile master  
Who takes in high dudgeon our life-saving role.

And then *The Trade* :

The Scout's quadruple funnel flames  
A mark from Sweden to the Swin,  
The Cruiser's thundrous screw proclaims  
Her comings out and goings in :  
But only whiffs of paraffin  
Or creamy rings that fizz and fade  
Show where the one-eyed Death has been.  
That is the custom of "The Trade".

Or perhaps *The Egg-shell* is more whimsically sardonic :

When the Witch of the North took an Egg-shell  
 With a little Blue Devil inside.  
 "Sink," she said, "or swim," she said,  
 "It's all you will get from me.  
 And that is the finish of him!" she said,  
 And the Egg-shell went to sea.

The wind got up with the morning,  
 And the fog blew off with the rain,  
 When the Witch of the North saw the Egg-shell  
 And the little Blue Devil again.  
 "Did you swim?" she said. "Did you sink?" she said.  
 And the little Blue Devil replied :  
 "For myself I swam, but I think," he said,  
 "There's somebody sinking outside."

And then we come back from grimness to the pathos behind  
 it all as sad as *The Nativity*<sup>1</sup> in *My Boy Jack* :

"Have you any news of my Boy Jack?"  
*Not this tide.*

"Oh dear, what comfort can I find?"  
*Not this tide,*  
*Not any tide,*  
*Except he did not shame*  
*his kind . . .*  
*Not even with that wind blowing*  
*and that tide.*

### *Grande Guerre at Sea*

So much for the little ships, and now let us turn to *Grande Guerre*, of which he has so little to say, but what he has to say is very much to the point when all the little writers and *embusqués* have the supreme impertinence to criticize Jellicoe personally, as distinct from remarks on the intense difficulty of the exactly right card to play when information is confusing and the light thick. Jutland was a splendid victory, we all know, now that the Harper record is no longer suppressed, and the Germans have let out their inner thoughts, and the bleat of Balfour of the broken nerve is forgotten. We now know that Trafalgar was child's play compared with Jellicoe's position, and the results also trivial in comparison. Let it be in admiration that we study it, but also for instruction and knowledge. Put in the pond, too, all those who write as an unusual American ex-naval skunk has just done of Jellicoe's "turpitude". Kipling in a very few words puts the story properly on the library table for all time. Read *The Verdicts*, and be men :

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<sup>1</sup> See later.



Not in the thick of the fight,  
 Not in the press of the odds,  
 Do the heroes come to their height,  
 Or we knew the demi-gods.

They grant us sudden days  
 Snatched from their business of war;  
 But we are too close to appraise  
 What manner of men they are.

They are too near to be great,  
 But our children shall understand  
 When and how our fate  
 Was changed, and by whose hand.

Our children shall measure their worth.  
 We are content to be blind . . .  
 But we know that we walk on a new-born earth  
 With the saviours of mankind.

Incidentally, if you have a pond handy for debunkers, there is an English writer about who refers to Lord Nelson of the Nile as "that arrogant little cocksparrow of an admiral". It would be good if some of our gentlemen who leave the universities with some suspicion of their normality would realize that that peculiarity does not qualify them to write scurrilously of great men.

### *The Years of War*

As the War pursued its weary years, the story of our thoughts continues in verse after the first outpourings of horror and astonishment. It was true enough that England—England more than Britain, for the Scots were dour and direct from the first—was ever slow to anger; for it takes a long time for the bulldog grip to tighten. Hear *The Beginnings* :

It was not part of their blood,  
 It came to them very late  
 With long arrears to make good,  
 When the English began to hate.

They were not easily moved,  
 They were icy willing to wait  
 Till every count should be proved,  
 Ere the English began to hate.

It was not preached to the crowd,  
 It was not taught by the State.  
 No man spoke it aloud,  
 When the English began to hate.

*The Holy War* is written on Bunyan's work of that name, in which that "Tinker out of Bedford" wrote thus :

"For here lay the excellent wisdom of him that built Mansoul, that the walls could never be broken down nor hurt by the most mighty adverse potentate unless the townsmen gave consent thereto." (Bunyan's *Holy War*.)

A Tinker out of Bedford,  
A vagrant oft in quod,  
A private under Fairfax,  
A minister of God—  
Two hundred years and thirty  
Ere Armageddon came,  
His single hand portrayed it,  
And Bunyan was his name !

So much for the *motif*. The verse is scathing, as each foulness that tried to lose the War was found also in Bunyan :

Likewise the Lords of Looseness  
That hamper faith and works,  
The Perseverance-Doubters,  
And Present Comfort shirks. . . .

Also were Pope and neutrals the object of his scorn :

The Pope, the swithering Neutrals,  
The Kaiser and his Gott. . . .

The hatred of neutrals as shown here and in the story *Sea Constables* is but voicing the universal views of all those behind the scenes in the World War, when mines were dropped in our fairways by neutral ships and every illicit action taken by many of the lesser neutrals of the "dirty dog" category.

The allusion to the Holy Father is, of course, his failure to protest at the Belgian and other atrocities perpetrated on his own flock by others of the same. It is even more bitterly reiterated in *A Song at Cockcrow*, and this phase of the War should well be recalled to those who might otherwise be misled by the clever glossists of German propaganda.

The first time that Peter denied his Lord  
He had neither the Throne nor the Keys nor the Sword—  
A poor silly fisherman, what could he do  
When the cock crew—when the cock crew—  
But weep for his wickedness when the cock crew ?

The next time that Peter denied his Lord  
He was Fisher of Men as foretold by the Word,  
With the Crown on his brow and the Cross on his shoe,  
When the cock crew—when the cock crew—  
*In Flanders and Picardy when the cock crew.*

The next time that Peter denied his Lord,  
 'Twas Mary the Mother in Heaven who heard,  
 And She grieved for the maidens and wives that they slew  
 When the cock crew—when the cock crew—

. *At Tirmonde and Aerschott when the cock crew.*

Bitter enough it is, and there is more to it, and perhaps some-one now asks was it worth while to sell your soul and see your Church in Germany persecuted.

There is a pitiful song as the story runs on, so sad that it had almost better have lain outside the big volume of collected verse. It is *A Recantation*, and is addressed to "Lyde of the Music Halls", and we all know who she was—bless her!<sup>1</sup> Thus it begins :

Ere certain Fate had touched a heart  
 By fifty years made cold,  
 I judged thee, Lyde, and thy art  
 O'er blown and over bold.

But he—but he, of whom bereft  
 I suffer vacant days . . .  
 He on his shield not meanly left—  
 He cherished all thy lays.

. . . . .

Never more rampant rose the Hall  
 At thy audacious line  
 Than when the news came in from Gaul  
 Thy son . . . had followed mine.

Those who know how Lord Roberts, reading out the news from the tape to others at his club, came to the news of his son's gallant end, read on and never faltered, will appreciate that verse.

The soul of tragedy is reached, too, in *A Nativity* :

*The Babe was laid in the Manger  
 Between the gentle kine—  
 All safe from cold and danger—  
 But it was not so with mine.  
 (With mine ! With mine !)*

And then the pitiful wail :

The Cross was raised on high ;  
 The Mother grieved beside—

But for the many mothers of the world :

Is it well, is it well with the child ?  
 For I know not where he is laid.

<sup>1</sup> But the facts do not quite fit the verse, for all its depth, and some say that he has run "Lyde" and Harry Lauder together.

And then the poet—for this is real poet's work—turns to the words of Mary the Mother to comfort them :

“Ah, who will answer my word ?”  
The broken mother prayed.  
“They have taken away my Lord,  
And I know not where he is laid.”

And then comes the last line :

“It is well, it is well with the child !”

So on we read the moods of mothers and men, till we come to perhaps that most pitiful song of all—the song of Russia, when her soldiers and moderates are still trying to save Holy Russia from the orgy of murder and ordure that established the Bolshevist terror over the graves of the innocent millions. There was still some hope for the Kerenski *régime*, or some chance of saving Russia. Our pacifists were ever prompt to let them alone to be massacred—at the time, too, when eighty-seven German and Austrian divisions were pouring into Russia to help themselves to the Ukraine grain.

It will suffice to quote the last verse as a great nation died :

God rest you, merry gentlemen, and keep you in your mirth !  
Was ever kingdom turned so soon to ashes, blood, and earth ?  
'Twixt the summer and the snow . . . seeding-time and frost—  
Arms and victual, hope and counsel, name and country lost !

Singing . . . *Let down by the foot and the head—  
Shovel and smooth it all !  
So do we bury a Nation dead . . .  
And who shall be next to fall, good sirs,  
With your good help to fall ?*

God send that fair France go not the same way while Hitler and Mussolini save their own nations !

Early in the saga Lord Roberts passed away, and the verses in which Kipling recorded it have already been quoted.

He noted the drama that marked the passings of Roberts and Kitchener, the one already waiting for that order to the old soldier : “Pile your arms ! Pile your arms ! Pile your arms !” —the other still at the helm.

As the years roll on, he marks another milestone. That the United States stayed out so long from sharing the burden of civilization Kipling notices not, till they made reparation. When they did, it was swift and fierce, from rooting out Indian sedition at 'Frisco to telling the hyphenated-Germans where they got off. It was not till then that Kipling, whose lady was from the States, puts pen to paper. He calls it *The Choice*, and it begins : “The American spirit speaks” :

Not at a little cost,  
 Hardly by prayer or tears,  
 Shall we recover the road we lost  
 In the drugged and doubting years.

In the Gates of Death rejoice !  
 We see and hold the good—  
 Bear Witness, Earth, We have made our choice  
 With Freedom's brotherhood !

The tragedy of the early events in Mesopotamia was sure to have drawn his pen—this time, however, not with quite so sure a touch, for he took his theme from the over-gear'd hysteria of a writer who was not there. I, who was one of those sent to clear up the mess, know well how bad things were, but the badness was due to a concatenation of many circumstances and in no sense to the turpitude of neglect, but rather to that of ignorance and reliance on map-strategy taken from a small-scale map—the danger of all war-mongers :

They shall not return to us, the resolute, the young,  
 The eager and whole-hearted whom we gave :  
 But the men who left them thriftily  
 To die in their own dung,  
 Shall they come with years and honour to the grave ?

“The slothfulness that waited and the arrogance that slew” is not the right note in the story. The ignorance of the many is here the horse to flog. Nevertheless, it marks forcefully the horror that, through errors many and pitiful, the “resolute, the young”, gave their lives. The Tigris was not the only place where ignorance and folly left their bitter mark.

Now turn to a happier note. In *The Irish Guards* we have the splendid lilt and *motif* of his earlier ballads :

We're not so old in the Army List,  
 But we're not so young at our trade,  
 For we had the honour at Fontenoy  
 Of meeting the Guards Brigade.

*Old days ! The Wild Geese are fighting,  
 Head to the storm as they faced it before.*

And then the last verse :

We're not so old in the Army List,  
 But we're not so new in the ring,  
 For we carried our packs with Marshal Sax  
 When Louis was our King.  
 But Douglas Haig's our Marshal now  
 And we're King George's men. . . .

The end of the long saga closes with three searching ballads—first *The Epitaphs*, that “touch strong men’s hearts with glory till they weep” ; *Rebirth*, that expresses deep wonder of the war-racked at the picture of themselves at peace ; and *Justice*, that treats of the end of blatant world-bullies and world-stormers.

*The Epitaphs* are very beautiful ; at times they are also very bitter, and again worth repeating, as has been said, so that the soft sawder from the Berlin propaganda shop shall not be swallowed unsifted, even though we will give honest good-bye to by-gones if others can do the same. Here are a few, my young friends :

#### *A Servant*

We were together when the War began.  
He was my servant—and the better man.

#### *A Son*

My son was killed while laughing at some jest.  
I would I knew  
What it was, and it might serve me in a time  
When jests are few.

#### *The Wonder*

Body and spirit I surrendered whole  
To harsh instructors—and received a soul . . .  
If mortal man could change me through and through  
From all I was—what may the God not do ?

#### *R.A.F. (Aged Eighteen)*

Laughing through clouds, his milk-teeth still unshed,  
Cities and men he smote from overhead.  
His deaths delivered, he returned to play  
Childlike, with childish things, now put away.

#### *The Sleepy Sentinel*

Faithless the watch that I kept : now I have none to keep.

I sleep because I am slain. They slew me because I slept.

#### *Batteries Out of Ammunition*

If any mourn us in the workshop, say  
We died because the shift kept holiday.

This bitter line is one of outraged Belgium :

#### *Raped and Revenged*

One used and butchered me : another spied  
Me broken—for which thing an hundred died.  
So it was learned among the heathen hosts  
How much a free-born woman’s favour costs.

*V.A.D. Mediterranean* is an epitaph of a ship torpedoed by a submarine near Salonika, when many sisters died :

Ah, would swift ships had never been, for then we ne'er had found  
These harsh Aegean rocks between, this little virgin drowned,  
Whom neither spouse nor child shall mourn, but men she nursed through  
pain.

And . . . certain keels for whose return the heathen look in vain.

There are many more sad ones—of the officer in a destroyer going home to his bride, but rammed by accident by a friend ; and another of *The Bridegroom*, killed after his lightning honeymoon. Don't, my dear new generation, forget what your fathers knew ! Father was killed in the War. You were too small to know, but here the tragedy is told for you to remember for all your time on earth.

*Justice* is bitter enough too, and it prays the prayer that has apparently failed :

That neither schools nor priests,  
Nor Kings may build again  
A people with the heart of beasts  
Made wise concerning men.

. . . . .

And we in faith and honour keep  
That peace for which they paid.

### *The Pleasure Cruise*

In 1933 appeared a terrible thing, *The Pleasure Cruise* (with apologies to Lucan), with a very distinct attempt to lure our foolish people and their Governments from their fatuous peace imagery, and we may deal with it here, as it is war subject. Many of the departed (all soldiers of the War) come to Charon to recross the Styx, stating they have leave to revisit the land of their birth. Hermes, in charge, demands from each how he came to lose his life, and the answers show that it was almost always because they had no training in realities in their youth, and neglected first principles. For instance, Damasius breaks his legs falling into a hole, and when Hermes says it was a silly trick, he answers : "You forget I was trained for fifteen seasons upon ground not only flat, but daily flattened by way of rollers."

Then one Atkeinos tells how he died in uncut wire, and Hermes says : "What then of catapults whose bolts in war batter down expressly such things ?"

Atkeinos : "They were few at the first, and the bolts so hard to procure that we were restricted to six casts a day."

Hermes : "But later surely there were many ?"

Atkeinos : "Many indeed, and those of the best. But by that time many indeed of the men were dead, and those of the best."

And so the pleasure-party return to Britain and are struck dumb at the fatuous horror. And after questioning Hermes, they say with one voice :

"There is but one conceivable end to this matter. This land lies naked to the covert strife of vengeance. How shall it endure?" And Hermes explains, "As it is now, for a certain time during which the demagogues will deliver up, by means of well-chosen words, all the arms, possessions, islands and commerce of the State, one by one, or altogether, to the enemy, according to their fears or his threats."

Perhaps the good Providence that seems to care for John Bull has intervened in time to save us !

A set of verses written during the War, but never published then, appeared in the *Sunday Pictorial* but the day after Kipling's death (January 18, 1936), entitled, *Sons of the Suburbs*, with a quite unnecessary editorial remark : "*With all its propaganda* [!] it still bears the unmistakable Kipling stamp—love of country and pride in fellow-countrymen." True ! But why the sentence that I have put in italics ? It was not even war propaganda, but a clever presentment of fact. It begins :

The sons of the suburbs were carefully bred,  
And quite unaccustomed to strife,  
The lessons they learned in the books they had read  
Had taught them the value of life,  
From Erith to Ealing they cherished a feeling  
That battle and slaughter were sin.

The Hun was otherwise.

The Tribes of the Teutons were otherwise trained,  
And accustomed to bloodshed from birth.

And it was shown that once they were stirred the Briton made it extremely unpleasant, with :

A live bayonet to express his regret  
At the actions of Hermann the Hun.

And the point of it all is that, being new to it, the sons of the suburbs made very fierce soldiers, on the analogy :

If the Church Warden's wife never danced in her life,  
She will kick off your hat when she starts.

The metre is our old friend that begins :

The Sons of the Prophet were hardy and bold  
And quite unaccustomed to fear.



And thus in his own way and his own metre did Kipling sing us through those years, and never again can it be said, as we should say of the Roses or even of the days of Napoleon, "What did it all seem like to those who watched the world in storm and died to make this German holiday?"

Remarkable accounts from Kipling's pen of the making of the New Army (1915) appeared in the *Daily Telegraph*, printed by MacMillan, in paper covers, and *The War Among the Mountains* showed the amazing and heroic work of the Italian Army on the Tyrolean front—work so often overshadowed by the disaster in the plains.

### *The Prose Subsidiaries*

In his last book of collected stories, *Limits and Renewals* (1932), there is one war-time story—*The Tie*—almost an extravaganza, but most welcome to all who hate the "unjust caterer", to use Kipling's own biblical phrase. Also it is material for those to whom the school tie is a constant gall, only to be ended when all schools "igh or low" have their own tie, whether they be council schools or whether they be the big private schools to which custom gives the title "public". When that obtains, we shall be free of the obsession which so rankles in the hearts of writers who have no tie, and peace on that count will reign. The other bugbear, the misunderstood and misquoted *puckka sahib*, will also perhaps be released.

*The Tie* is the story of a very indignant officers' mess of a New Army battalion of 1914, fed atrociously by some contractor at fierce rates. The story begins in the best Kipling gambit :

"Men in War will instinctively act as they have been taught to do in peace—for a certain time. The wise man is he who knows when that time is up. Mr. Morrison Haylock (Vertue and Pavey, Contractors, E.C.) did not know."

The battalion was "quartered in Blagstowe Gaol, a vast improvement on huts. We should have been quite content had they only given us prisoners' food."

So one day it chanced that Mr. Haylock drove down in a natty car and ran into a barricade put up owing to some scare orders from London. Mr. Haylock, stopped by a sentry, was foolish enough to give his name : "I'm Haylock. Carry on, you men ! I tell you I'm Haylock." And he wore what is whimsically described as an old E.H.W. tie. The second-lieutenant who tells the story, "savage with a semi-starvation and indigestion", with honourable right to the same tie, orders

him to the guard-room. There, surrounded by half a dozen young officers, he is properly bull-dosed in a style that is still good for the really nasty ones. Haylock prevaricates and makes his case worse.

He is smacked hard on each cheek, and puts up his hand to his face as the rottenest little smug would when slapped : "Oooh ! Oooh !" Another pulls his hand down and gives him another slap on the chops. He prays to be let go and he will put it right. Not so ; he is condemned to have supper with them. Then he is filled with all his own garbage, a naughty little sneak among his own schoolfellows, and let go at midnight properly humble and tame. Good food to that angry mess was the result, and that is the way to treat the world's Haylocks, whether they wear an old-school tie that they are not fit to sport or whether they do not.

Good fun, but no deeper lesson, is this story *The Tie*.

For the rest he has left us no real short stories of the War save only *Sea Constables* aforesaid ; but there are in *Debits and Credits* five more stories, more war-time than war. They may be referred to here because of their war-time connection, but they are rather examples of his modern style and fashion of telling a story and weaving a pattern. These are they : *In the Interests of the Brethren*—an inimitable story for the Freemason, but of little interest to the lay world, save in the description of the tobacconist's shop where the story begins. It is that of a quiet but old and dignified Lodge which lays itself out to deal with the stray Brethren from Lodges the world over, whether keen or careless, that come by way of port or hospital, in a measure of kindness and forethought that is admirable.

The Masonic Lodge in question is 5837 E.C. Faith and Works. The diversity of creatures who come to the Lodge exactly suits Kipling's particular faculty, and he develops what in Masonic phrase is the "Universality of the Science". Here is a parson in the Lodge who makes it his business, in turn with others, to wake the tired wayfarers who use the Lodge as a rest-house as they land from France, and take them to their trains :

" 'I'm on duty tonight to wake them for their trains. They do not respect the cloth on these occasions.' He turned his broad back on me and continued the discussion with a Brother from Aberdeen by way of Mitylene, where, in the intervals of mine-sweeping, he had evolved a complete theory of the Revelations of St. John the Divine in the island of Patmos.

"I fell also into the hands of a Sergeant-Instructor of Machine-Guns . . . by profession a designer of ladies' dresses. He told me that, as a class, Englishwomen 'lose on their corsets what they make on their clothes, and that Satan himself can't save a woman who wears thirty-shilling corsets under a thirty-guinea costume',"

which, if not Masonic, is very sound talk, or was then, when corsets were necessary.

Then there was a sergeant-major who wanted dispensation for marching Lodges all along the front, when half the Army would want to join the Craft. This I know to be true, who was Master for two years of the first Lodge on the Tigris, a Lodge which, for that period and more, had three emergency meetings a week. Masons will know what that means. A queer thing, my masters, is this mysterious Craft.

Another story of exceeding joy and quaintness withal is *The Janeites*, a story told by one of the chance visitors to this Lodge, Faith and Works, by one Humberstall, a garrison artilleryman much wounded, who had slunk back to the front to be found as mess-waiter in a battery mess—a heavy battery—very heavy too, for the matter of that—where the major and captain were Jane Austen fanatics and talked the jargon. A new subaltern has the same disease, and is at once made free of everything. The other officer's servant is a broken-down intelligentzia, one Macklin, who understands the game and initiates Humberstall into the "passwords" of the Jane Craft, whereby he too comes by great favour and much tobacco without in the least knowing why.

It is all very good fooling—nay, that is the wrong word—but highly amusing extravaganza, especially since Humberstall has chalked on their gun the names of Jane's characters, "The Lady Catherine de Bugg"—but he meant Burgh—on their Skoda gun; "General Tilney" on the naval twelve-inch; and "Revd. Collins" on the nine-point-two. Here it might appear to an intelligent artilleryman that "it's a mighty queer battery you have there, with your three different-calibred pieces". But Kipling can be so absurdly accurate that I can't help thinking that on some occasion of which he had ken these odd weapons *were* grouped together. I have referred to this uncanny trick of his in telling the origin of the ballad of *Snarleyow*.

After *The Janeites* comes *A Madonna of the Trenches*, one of those strange stories of Kipling's of which his later writings have many examples, in which a weird, uncanny conception is mingled with a deep-seated understanding of the manner of men—and women. This again is told as happening within

the precincts of Lodge Faith and Works, which adds a good deal to the force of the telling. The theme is of an old sergeant, joined from civil life, and an entirely unsuspected life-long attachment between him and "Aunt Bella", the aunt of a shell-shocked man by whom in one of whose nervous fits the story is revealed. Hitherto he has always concealed the real cause of his horrors.

The sergeant is due for leave from the trenches, but instead gasses himself with charcoal fumes in a disused dressing-station on his way out to take up his leave. "Aunt Bella", the perfectly good wife of a citizen, is close on fifty, and has written to her old friend Sergeant Godsell to say that her trouble will be over on the 21st, her trouble being a cancer operation. On the 21st the nephew has been astonished to see his aunt standing in a corner by an approach to the trench-line, but is then satisfied it has been rags on a tree. But he tells his "uncle" the sergeant, an old friend of all the family, of it :

" 'While I told him, I laughed—that's the last time I 'ave laughed. "Oh . . . you've seen 'er, 'ave you," says he, quite natural-like.' "

Strangwick—that was the young man's name—walks down with Godsell, who picks up en route two old braziers, and they come to the old abandoned dressing-station door.

" 'Then 'e stretches out 'is neck a bit, in a way 'e 'ad, an' 'e says, "Why, Bella !" 'e says. "Oh, Bella !" 'e says, "Thank Gawd !" just like that. An' then I saw—tell you I saw—Auntie Armine herself standin' by the old dressin'-station door, where first I thought I'd seen her.

. . . . .

" 'Then he says, "Why, Bella," 'e says, "this must be only the second time we've been alone together in all these years." An' I saw her half hold out her arms to 'im in that perishin' cold. An' she nearer fifty than forty an' me own aunt !"

" 'He picks up the braziers and goes on to the dug-out door. All that time Auntie Armine stood with 'er arms out . . . and a look in 'er face ! I didn't know such things was or could be ! Then he comes out an' says, "Come in, my dear," an' she stoops and goes into the dug-out with that look on her face ! An' then 'e shuts the door from inside and starts wedging it up. So 'elp me, Gawd, I saw an' 'eard all these things with my own eyes an' ears !' "

Later an elderly man at the banquet thanks those who had ministered to Strangwick, saying that he was upset over a breach-of-promise case. He was engaged to a perfectly suitable young lady who he now said wasn't his ideal. The old gentleman said his name was Armine, "my nephew by marriage".

It is a strange story, told in the way only Kipling can tell it, a story of true love that never came to fruition, a faithful woman, and the nephew who suddenly realized what true love could be. It is worth reading twice over to get the true hang of it, and it may also be called a typical story of Kipling's latter-day work at its best.

All the stories except *The Sea Captains* and *The Gardener* are told within the portals of *Faith and Works*, and the next, *A Friend of the Family*, is concerning a market-gardener conscripted, whose business then goes bankrupt while his rival over the way has been exempted. The market-gardener's trench chum, a queer Australian from the back-o'-beyond, who had been brought up all his life with bushmen and never lived with whites, with a canny art of concealing himself, eventually destroys the rival's shacks and house with bombs, feigning an aeroplane raid, all because he was trench friend of the first gardener. It is extravaganza, but the drawing of the weird and faithful wild man is fascinatingly realistic.

It is but a yarn in which the war theme is the queer way men chummed together at the front.

The last of this group of six war-theme stories is at the end, beautiful and sad, and touches that intensely religious feeling which Kipling has shown in some of his later work. *The Gardener* is a post-War story. Helen Turrell years ago had a wild brother in the Indian Police, who died in India, a few weeks before his son was born, she said. Helen, whom lung trouble has taken to the South of France, has the child brought home to Marseilles by a nurse from whose carelessness the child has infantile dysentery. Helen, it appears, dismisses the nurse, takes charge herself, and eventually brings the infant safe and sound home with her, and he grows up the apple of her spinster eye.

Her nephew at six demands why she is not "Mummy" like other small boys'; Helen explains the difference between "Mummy" and "Auntie", but he is allowed to call her Mummy at night-time as a joke and a secret, and then Kipling tells of a sad little baby scene. And so the years roll on, and Michael and his aunt were supremely happy, till the War came and Michael, on his way to Oxford, joins the forces, eventually finding his way to France to the holocaust of all the young and

•

brave. Michael is so buried by a shell that he is never even found. No societies or organizations can help, and Helen subsides into that passive resignation that was all that was left to so many of Britain's best women. Long after came intimation that the body of Lieutenant Michael Turrell had been found, with silver identity-disc and a page of a letter to her and buried in Hagenzeele Third Military Cemetery. And she sets out with many to see her grave.

At the cemetery she assures the officer that she knows her grave, and there is a scene with a Lancashire woman who is searching for her illegitimate son's grave and is not sure which name he enlisted under. In a tea-house Helen meets an Englishwoman also going to one of the Hagenzeeles. The woman explains that this is her ninth visit. Not for herself . . . "thank heaven she had not lost", but to carry out commissions with wreaths or take photos for others. Mrs. Scarsworth—that is her name—fastens on to Helen, whom she bores with the stories of her commissions. But at their hotel she bursts into Helen's room and breaks down. Because she is so tired of lying she confides her agony—that she comes over with these pretexts to see a grave which she has no sort of legitimate pretext for being interested in.

"He ought to have been nothing to me. But he was. He was everything to me that he oughtn't to have been . . . the one real thing . . . the only thing that ever happened to me in all my life."

"How many years?" Helen asked.

"Six years and four months before, and two and three-quarters after. I've gone to him eight times since; tomorrow will be the ninth."

"Helen caught her hands and bowed over them, and murmured, 'Oh, my dear! My dear!'"

"Mrs. Scarsworth stepped back, her face all mottled.

"My God!" said she. "Is *that* how you take it?"

Next morning Helen walked alone to her cemetery. Only a few of the new gravestones had yet been set up, and the rest was a mass of nondescript wooden crosses. She could not find her row in the apparent confusion.

"A man knelt behind a line of headstones—evidently a gardener, for he was firming a young plant in the

soft earth. She went towards him, her paper in hand. He rose at her approach, and without prelude or salutation asked : 'Who are you looking for ?'

" 'Lieutenant Michael Turrell . . . my nephew,' said Helen, slowly and word for word, as she had many thousands of times in her life. The man lifted his eyes and looked at her with infinite compassion before he turned from the fresh-sown grass towards the naked black crosses.

" 'Come with me,' he said, 'and I will show you where your son lies.'

"When Helen left . . . she saw the man bending over his young plants ; and she went away supposing him to be the gardener."

It is thus that Kipling shows his infinite understanding of the world's misery, and his great sense of the world's parallels.

Fierce and bitter at times though his sentiments most rightly were, yet no one more than he longed for all wars to cease, and the memory of this terrible tragedy to be lifted if such could ever come to pass. He has said it with beauty in *The Rebirth* :

If any God should say  
 "I will restore  
 The world her yesterday  
 Whole as before  
 My judgment blasted it,"—who would not lift  
 Heart, eye and hand in passion o'er the gift ?

## CHAPTER XVIII

### KIPLING'S LATER WORKS—CONCLUSION

Later Stories and Verse—*Uncovenanted Mercies*—*Something About Myself*—  
The Conclusion of the Matter

#### *Later Stories and Verse*

APART from Kipling's special treatment of the War, it is of interest to note the change—the not unnatural change—in the general style of the short stories in the last twenty-five years of his writing life. It will be noticed how modern science, the incredible discoveries of that period, appealed to him sometimes to make great stories when wireless was in its birth, and the possibilities of the wave theory struck him, or in the organization of air traffic, in which the effectiveness of his vision daily became more probable, as *With the Night Mail*.

Invention, mysticism, advance of science have taken his imagination and been made subjects for his short stories. Themes of this nature began in the collection *Traffics and Discoveries*. There was *Wireless*, that powerful story—almost macabre—when Keats, or something very like it, came through on the “waves” to the dying tuberculous dispenser in Mr. Cashel's chemist's shop, with a wealth of weird colour that was “something new in the Kipling line” !—to use the phrase of the moment. There was more power in it than had been evident before, but with it also, as in *They*, that belonged to the same period, a tendency to mistiness. It was not quite clear exactly what it all meant. Perhaps it was not meant to be, or perhaps the writer saw through the darkened glass more clearly than we who read. In fact, though most of us have read *They* a hundred times for the joy of all that it contains, we are still not quite sure !

In *Wireless*, as you remember, Kipling the teller—one always assumes that the teller is himself—interested in Marconi experiments, had been invited to watch experiments which the chemist's nephew is making. It is a bitter-cold night. The chemist himself is not interested, nor Shaynor, the assistant, who, sick unto death, goes out with a friend. He comes back coughing, is dosed, and suddenly, while they are waiting for Poole to call up, Shaynor in a trance acts as a loud-speaker and begins to give off Keats.



A fairy land for you and me  
Across the foam beyond. . . .

And it continues in its fiery beauty, with Poole complaining that they can't make head or tale of the message that is coming in at their end from somewhere !

Mrs. Bathurst deals with the then beginning cinema, and it is really a Navy story. All the world knew Mrs. Bathurst, all things to all sailor-men as a hostess.

" 'She was a widow,' said Pyecroft. 'Left so very young and never re-spliced. She kep' a little hotel for warrants and non-coms close to Auckland, and she always wore black silk, and 'er neck . . . ' "

But to one of her admirers the memory of her was all in all. At Capetown, Pyecroft, who is telling the story to Pritchard, went to the cinema and saw the Plymouth Express arriving at Paddington, and suddenly,

"quite slowly, from be'ind two porters—carrying a little reticule an' lookin' from side to side—comes out Mrs. Bathurst. There was no mistakin' the walk in a hundred thousand. . . . I 'eard Dawson in the tickey seats be'ind sing out : 'Christ ! There's Mrs. B. !' "

All rejoiced ; but to Petty-Officer Vickery, a comparative stranger, it was more than that. For five consecutive nights Pyecroft, as a matter of camaraderie, accompanied Vickery to that cinema, and then it moved up-country. There was some ammunition going up under escort, and Vickery got himself detailed for the duty so as to follow the film. He was eventually found dead on the veld. The everyday point is the extraordinary fascination that Mrs. Bathurst, the beautiful, aloof, yet supremely sympathetic widow, had for all men, and the memory in poor Vickery's mind that ended in his death. But our point here, apart from our admiration of the way that the story is presented, is the idea that appealed to him that the new cinema in its presentment of real things may bring about a quite new form of human drama. That was before Hollywood had started plucking up kisses by the roots, and actual fact was the feature.

In *Actions and Reactions* there is a strange story after Kipling's modern heart and, after his modern way, faintly obscure. *The House Surgeon* is a long story and deals with a curse, a curse over a mid-Victorian villa in a residentially developed countryside, full of well-to-do people. The owner explains in a

liner smoking-room of the cruel depression that affects him and his elderly wife, and is killing his twenty-year-old daughter ; and the man who tells the story promises the owner that he will come down and see and feel the gloom. A sumptuous car takes him to a sumptuous house, where a tennis-party of young people is in progress. The guest goes to his room through "a wide parquet-floored hall furnished in pale lemon"—and he was left in his room, rather close, and smelling of perfumed soap. He washed his hands, and as he did so began to feel a little tired :

"And it was just then that I was aware of a little grey shadow. . . . Once more I heard my brain . . . telegraph to every quarter for help, release or diversion. The door opened and M'Leod reappeared . . . and said, 'You've got it now already, ain't it ?' "

And if you don't know the story, read it again very carefully ; you will enjoy the feeling of the roots of your hair tingling, which is the true test of a weird story.

There is a dual influence, a second presence also, and the "house surgeon" pursued the clue of the former owners, and finds two old sisters in a hydro, stays there and is called in, in the middle of the night, because the elder sister has tried to throw herself from the window in the throat spasm that is the family disease. Indignantly the old lady repudiates the idea of suicide ; she but fought for air. Fiercely she repudiated the idea, but all these years she had believed that Aggie, her sister, had made away with herself, having been found dead below the window of the room in which the "house surgeon" had stopped. She was persuaded to come to the house to see for herself the low, dangerous window, while the M'Leods hid in the servants' quarters. The fierce old *hidalgo* was amazed at the money that had been spent, muttering at the way "these Jews did themselves", but, seeing the window in question and with her own drama fresh in her mind, recanted. Immediately the dual oppression disappeared and the presence went. Dead Annie was appeased, and the house was cured. It was another of the "new vogue" that had left the Bisarás and the Bubbling Well Roads to probe other mysteries.

After the story comes the *Rabbi's Song*, of which one verse runs :

Let nothing linger after—  
No whispering ghost remain,  
In wall, or beam, or rafter  
Of any hate or pain.

•

Cleanse and call home thy spirit,  
Deny her leave to cast,  
On aught thy heirs inherit,  
The shadow of her past.

It is a verse and a prayer that is worth remembering.

*The Wish House*<sup>1</sup> has been referred to elsewhere. Sussex love that endures, old legends, and a hint again of the weird and uncanny are here, all part of the same modern tendency in his story-telling. In the last collection—*Limits and Renewals*—which contains also some of the stories of the World War already referred to, are two which dive deep into some of the newer principles and methods of medical research. *Unprofessional* begins with a group of struggling medical friends, one of whom—Harries—having become rich beyond dreams from an uncle who struck oil, proposes to start his friends on their research hobbies, giving Vaughan the clinic that he has long wanted and Loftie his laboratory, on condition that Harries' own ideas on "influence" are studied.

"That's what you said when you lectured our company about Astrology—that night under Arras."

"D'you mean planetary influences?" Loftie spoke.

"This isn't my lecture," Harries flushed. "This is my gamble. We can't tell on what system this damn' universe is wound, but we know we're in the middle of every sort of wave, as we call 'em. They used to be "influences"."

"Like Venus, Cancer and all that lot?" Vaughan inquired."

So they got their clinic, nursing-home and laboratory, and the stage is now set for the story, which is astounding but not always easy to follow. Vaughan at Pegotty's had operated on two cases in the same stage of development of the same disease in the same part of the body, both women of similar age and physique, Cases 127 and 128. Loftie made marvellous cultures from the tissues, and Harries wanted their growth watched under continuous observation, and all changes logged. Frost, handy-man and ex-captain of a turret, is charged with this. The long and short of it is that the cultures prove to have different waves and different periods, and there seemed to be some rule about their recurrences. It all took a long time, and cost much. Mice inoculated with the culture behaved strangely and similarly under it at recurring intervals. The logs showed remarkable graphs and curves. Now Case No. 128—Mrs. Berners—made a good recovery and stayed to look after the

<sup>1</sup> *Debits and Credits.*

linen in the clinic, but had quaint little fussy ways of her own, and was a little eccentric.

In the course of time No. 127 came back for another operation. No. 128 kept all right, but one day one of the mice inoculated from 128's culture ran round and round her cage, making movements with her paws, and eventually broke her neck against the sides thereof. The film showed her gesturing with her paws ludicrously like Mrs. Berners when she was in a fussy or busy mood. And it meant that one day Mrs. Berners might throw herself under a lorry as her culture mouse had broken its neck in the round-about.

The attack soon comes, and the watchers are ready for it, and Mrs. Berners rushes head first at the wall as did the mouse at the wire, but is caught and nursed back from the grave by all of them. Frost, who has been more than interested in her, is happy. He has had a good deal to do in preventing her dying, too, and through his body certain injections were toned down for her. He is rewarded.

As Harries sums up the result of it all, "The main point as I read it is that it makes one—not so much *think*—research is summed up with thinking—as *imagine* a bit."

It is a fiercely scientific and dramatic story with great wealth of scientific or pseudo-scientific detail which Kipling, after that marvellous gift of his, had assimilated and turned to his uses. Incidentally, it gives us some glimpse of the way modern science works. As a theme for fictional treatment it was decidedly new.

In the old joyous vein of rollicking fun, with an understanding of the French that is the gift of few, come *The Bull that Thought*<sup>1</sup> and *The Miracle of St. Jubanus*.<sup>2</sup>

Both are served dressed in French colour and shrewd observation of the French way of thought. Travelling westward from a town by the mouths of the Rhone, Kipling meets M. André Voiron, once of the French Colonial Service in the Far East, now of Voiron Frères, "who is all things here". M. Voiron had come back from Annam to his well-beloved picked white-and-yellow cattle of the Camargue and the Crau. One of his calves would chase the children who baited him with intense sagacity. He could kick, too, knowing his ranges like a good gunner.

"Yes—the creature was a thinker along the lines necessary to his sport; and he was a humorist also, like so many natural murderers. One knows the type . . . it

<sup>1</sup> *Debits and Credits.*

<sup>2</sup> *Limits and Renewals.*

possesses a curious truculent mirth—almost indecent, but infallibly significant. . . .”

In the local imitation French bullring he was trained, and then, excelling, was sold by Christophe the herdsman, an autocrat, to the Spanish. Finally Christophe informs Voiron that Apis is making his début in a small Catalan town on the road to Barcelona. Voiron went ! Apis had won several bouts, destroying horses and men. He commanded all the troop, and finally arrived at an understanding with Chisto, the oldest matador. They played farce—a half-tragedy; neither would injure the other. Apis was a master of farce, of innuendo, of activity. They held good people spellbound.

“We knew that Apis knew that as he had saved Chisto, so Chisto would save him. At last, when none could laugh longer, the man threw his cape across the bull’s back, his arm round his neck, and cried to the men at the Gates of the Toril, ‘Gentlemen, open to me and my honourable little donkey.’”

The second story opens with verses to *The Curé*, who in the story is an old officer, too, as the priests were mobilized, and now and again his contempt for the “foot chasseur” appears :

His pay was lower than our Dole;  
The piteous little church he tended  
Had neither roof nor vestments whole  
Save what his own hard fingers mended.

There was a wedding, and after the collection for charity had been made and the procession had come out, two small acolytes began fighting over an odd sou.

“‘All acolytes are little devils,’ said the priest benignly, and descended to the wedding-breakfast, which one could see in plan, set out by the stream in a courtyard of cut-limes. His bearing was less that of a *curé* than a soldier, for his soutane swung like a marching-overcoat, and he lacked that bend of his neck—the ‘priest’s stoop’—with which the Church stamps her sons when they are caught young.”

The visitor and the priest forgather. He has been there for the best part of forty years, and talks of his folk.

“‘A good people . . . composed of a few old clans . . . Meilhac . . . Leclos . . . Falloux . . . Poivrain . . . Ballart. Monsieur may have observed their names upon our Monument.’ He pointed downwards to the last cast-iron

*poilu*, which seemed to be the standard pattern for war memorials in that region."

And then he tells the story of St. Jubanus, a Gaul commanding a Gaulish legion at the time that Christianity was spreading in the Roman Army. "We were—he was engaged against the Bo—the Alemanni . . ." And so forth—a worthy patron saint and martyr. And then comes the long, intimate tale of a French village and its folk. How did Kipling know or imagine it? And the side-splitting account of how poor, shattered Martin Ballard regained his voice, after years of silence, in laughter when the little devils of acolytes got the ribs of the priest's giant umbrella in church wound up in a rival's beard, and how the miracle and the whole contretemps was due to St. Jubanus. Oh, read—and yell, too, and take your car to that part of France where such things can be and happen, and if you can see the wonderside of old France as Kipling did, you will not have driven by the left-hand drive in vain.

There was an underlying issue in the priest's story, pride in St. Jubanus, who had been confounded with St. Julian of Auvergne, a worthy Roman officer, no doubt, but not a Gaul. Julian was "as Gallic as . . ." And he beckoned to a young man of the large-boned, well-fleshed type. . . . He moved up slowly, smiling.

"'As Gallic as he,' the priest went on. 'Look at him ! He was that one who was pinned to my umbrella by his back on that day, and . . . tell Monsieur what they call you in the village now.'

"The youth's smile widened to a heavenly grin. '*Parapluie, monsieur,*' said he, and climbed on."

That is Kipling at his newest and his oldest, and at his best in charm and colour, and the recognition of a story that is worth telling.

In the same collection is a very modern story, *The Tender Achilles*, of the intimate talking of doctors of their war experiences, and the tragedies of the operating-tables in casualty clearing-stations, to work up to the point of how a very noted bacteriologist, badly wanted at St. Pegotty's, and who should never have been allowed to waste his marvellous gifts at the front, where nerve and spirit were broken, is restored. Clever, and a remarkable sketch of things and people medical, but a little too intricate for many a reader to unravel. The missing bacteriologist had a slight injury to his heel, on which the story hangs.

The later verse has been dealt with in several instances under "Great Occasions" (Chapter III), but there are several that do not come under that. *Victoria's Shrine of Remembrance* (1934) is alluded to in Chapter XV. *Our Lady of the Sackcloth* is otherwise. It appeared in the *Morning Post*, April 15, 1935. Founded on an Ethiopian MS. of the old priest at Philae—the Bishop who bade him desist from office—the Bishop's decision to wear sackcloth, the woman who helped his clumsy fingers shape and sew it. . . .

There was a Priest at Philae,  
Tongue-tied, feeble and old

And the congregation mocked him

Kindly and wise was the Bishop.  
Unto the Priest said he :—  
"Patience till thou art stronger,  
And keep meantime with me."

And there came riding in the desert "A Queen of the Desert Born", who found the old priest grieving that he could not officiate.

High she swayed on her camel,  
Beautiful to behold :

Low she leaned from her litter—  
Soft she spoke in his ear :—

"For again thou shalt serve at the Offering  
And thy tongue shall be loosed in praise

"Go in peace to the Bishop  
Carry him word from me—  
That the woman who sewed the sackcloth  
Would have him set thee free !"

It is redolent of old embroidery and beautiful stained glass, and has the ring of Eddi.

Very different comes a song of warning published in 1933—very pregnant to all who have watched the horizon. It is called *Bonfires on the Ice*. This ringing of the old note of warning, as in the days of Lord Roberts' National Service Campaign, gripped just in time. He gave it again two years later at the dinner of the Royal Society of St. George (May 6, 1935), once again the theme of the mad "disbanding of Archers and Bowmen". It is, especially, an attack on the "hot-air merchant".

*Bonfires on the Ice*

*Gesture . . . outlook . . . vision . . . avenue*  
*Example . . . good will . . . achievement . . .*  
*Appeasement . . . limit of risk. Common Political Form.*

(The above is the heading.)

We know the Rocket's upward whizz,  
 We know the boom before the Bust,  
 We know the whistling wail which is  
 The stick returning to the Dust.

. . . . .

We know the Pie—likewise the Crust  
 We know a Bonfire on the Ice.

It is very much like *Uncovenanted Mercies* and the rotund, complacent Michael.

We know the Father to the Thought  
 Which argues Babe and Cockatrice,  
 Would play together were they taught.  
 We know *that* Bonfire on the Ice.

There is one more in the vein of *The Bridge Builders* and *The Ship that Found Herself*, but an allegory and not one of his technical miracles; it is called *Hymn of Breaking Strain*. It appeared in a supplement to *The Engineer* on March 15, 1935—almost his swan song, save for *The King and the Sea*.

The careful text-books measure,  
 (Let all who build beware)  
 The load, the shock, the pressure  
 Material can bear.  
 So when the faulty girder  
 Lets down the grinding span,  
 The blame or loss or murder  
 Is lain upon the man.  
*Not on the stuff—the man.*

It might, together with *Bonfires on the Ice*, be called *The Re-Education of a Premier and a People*. And uncanny it is in its vision—the vision of one on the Threshold.

O veiled and secret Power,  
 Whose paths we seek in vain,  
 Be with us in our hour  
 Of overthrow and pain.

And it would seem that the prayer has been answered *before* the crisis, and that once again Britain will be true to herself, and confound her mockers.



Which is pretty good satire on the tripe folk.

Azrael remarks what wonderful work has been done with his sword at people's throat, and without showing the least sign of amusement suggests, "Death is a little crude. For that matter so's Birth." And he whimsically suggests an Inter-Departmental Committee. The Archangel is all over it, smiles at once, but thinks that a commission would give more ample powers to "explore all possible avenues", and invites the two to come and see some draft terms of reference. Satan says there is nothing he would like better, but unfortunately he is not master of his time, and he with Gabriel and Azrael take flight. After they have sunk three universes behind them, Satan remarks :

"'Now, that is a perfect example of the dyer's hand being subdued to what it works in. *'We don't give high marks to the men of Uz'*. Don't we ! I'm glad I've always dealt faithfully with all schoolmasters.'"

Then Kipling breaks off the dialogue into one of his amazing pieces of description, almost as strong as the scientific description in Genesis of the formless embryo world.

"The three nose-dived at that point where Infinity turns upon itself, till they folded their wings beneath the foundations of Time and Space, whose double weight bore down on them through the absolute Zeros of Night and Silence. Azrael was afraid : 'Have we gone beyond The Mercy ?' Reassured by Satan, they discussed the case of the peccant reconditioned spirits, and the evidence, and what the Archangel of the English had said.

"There was only one conclusion possible—if they should meet. You yourself read the copy of their Orders for Life.

"And what did our young friend do ? Rode off on glittering generalities about uplift and idealism and his precious scheme of debauching them with all the luxuries, because 'unhappy people can't make others happy'."

The long and the short of it is that Satan complains that he will have to put right Michael's sloppy work and give that couple hell, and "our young friend will take the credit of my success"—which was what "Evil itself shall pity" meant.

Satan asks leave to summon the woman's guardian angel, Ruya'il, the reconditioned soul. She appears in her last human shape, and Azrael, Angel of Death, says to her gently enough :

"'Think I've had the pleasure of seeing you, Mrs. . . .'  
(He gave her name, address and date of death.) 'You called for me and seemed glad to see me. Why?'"

"'Because I wanted to meet Gregory,' came the answer in the flat tones of the held.

"Satan chips in, 'You were under Our Hand for recondition and re-issue, Mrs. . . . For what cause?'"

"'Because of Gregory.'"

"'Who was re-issued as Khalka'il. And he because of you?'"

"'Yes.'"

"'On what terms were you re-issued as Guardian Spirits, please?'"

"'There were no terms. Gregory and I were free to meet in the course of our duties if we could. So we did. It wasn't *his* fault.'"

"'Those, by the way, were the last words Eve ever spoke to me,' Azrael whispered to Gabriel.

"'Indeed,' Satan resumed. 'So you met and incidentally your charges met too. I think that will be all. . . . Oh ! One minute more.'"

Here he asks them if they know a certain railway terminus, and brings tears to her eyes. Satan apologizes and lets her escape from that searching cross-examination. Satan then complains that his "young friend" Michael of the English should have had all this on his blotter before he called Satan in, instead of talking platitudes.

The man and woman were now back in Satan's care, she a lady of quality, he a public servant.

The Archangel of the English, to whom, as to his people, the years had brought higher education, was more optimistic than ever. This time he had confided to the three Archangels that, since mass action was the note of the age, he had discovered and was training an entire battalion of hand-picked souls, whose collective efforts towards the world's well-being he would aid with improved sanitary appliances and gratuitous sterilized public transport.

"What grasp and vision you have !" said Satan. And he asked if the Archangel remembered a man and a woman of whom Ruya'il was the Guardian Spirit. The Archangel does, and chirrup ; but Satan is persistent. "What happened to them?" The Archangel glanced at Azrael, who only said,

"Both filed." And Satan explains that the man had been put by his friends on an annuity and in a Rowton lodging-house with an incurable disease on him. That had disciplined him. And he shows the Archangel that he has an up-to-date terminus copied from the terrestrial one to test those who have promised to meet others. Pitiful folk come to meet the train, and are disappointed.

The Archangels moved towards the Station Hotel, till they were blocked by a seedy-looking person buttonholing the station-master, who reassures him.

" 'That's him,' said Satan. 'And behold he was in My Hand'—with a vengeance. Did you hear him giving his titles to impress the Station-master? . . . There's one, yonder, that 'ud never be allowed in the other Station up above.'

"A woman with a concertina and a tin cup took her stand on the kerb of the road by No. 1 platform, and sang pitifully—but few coins fell."

Satan, giving her name, explains how at one time people would pay anything you like to hear her sing and that now she was saving up her pennies to escape; he also adds that they often do till the very last, and then are caught and brought back, adding that it was an old Inquisition effect.

A telegram is handed him, faked by the administration, which Satan remarks is not quite cricket. "Reconsidered. Forgive. Forget."

He is borne fainting into the surgery. It is his last test and last choice. He is offered oblivion, and refuses, telling the doctor he'll see him damned first. As he goes, he says:

" 'I—I charge you at the Judgment—make it plain. . . . Alas, it was drink that had dogged his tongue.'

" 'There,' said Satan. 'You've seen a full test for ultimate breaking-strain . . . because it is written, "Even Evil shall pity."' " Azrael interposed, 'My orders are to dismiss to the Mercy. Where is it?'

But another casualty is brought in. A woman in a twitter of drugs, struggling, pleading to be allowed to meet the 7.12, as the nurse coos about "a nice cup of tea". Again she cries, "Dick! Dick! Come and help me. . . . It's me, Dickie! . . . You mustn't make me late for the 7.12, because . . . Don't forget. I charge you at the Judgment Seat, make it plain. . . ."

The nurse looked as Khalka'il had done—straight into Satan's eyes, and, "Go !' she commanded."

"Satan bowed his head.

"There was a knock, a scrabbling at the door; and the seedy-looking man shambled in.

" 'Sorry,' he began, 'but I think I left my hat here.'

"The woman on the couch wakened, and, turning, chin in hand, chuckled deliciously : 'What *does* it matter now, dear ?'

. . . . .

"The Three found themselves whirled into the void—two of them a little ruffled, the third somewhat apologetic

. . . . .

"Satan answered, 'I don't know whether you noticed that that nurse happened to be Ruya'il. . . .'

. . . . .

" 'But, my brothers, did you *really* think that we were needed there much longer ?' "

That is but a twentieth part of all that transpired, but perhaps you will think, if you have not done so already, that it is worth reading very carefully, both for the satire and for the human side of a morality play—such a play, perhaps, as the Book of Job foreshadowed. It is Kipling almost at his latest, the apostle of sympathy, of understanding, and, above all, of common sense.

### *Something of Myself*

As this book was in the press, Kipling's autobiography, *Something of Myself*, has appeared. It is in the familiar red with the elephant's head, that is part of the magic, outside. It is a very simple story of a simple, humble soul ; one feels that Mr. Maskelyne is showing us how he did it, how he learnt all that equipped him. It is a hero out-turking McTurk in the matter of debunking, showing us how easy it is to do, what we know well enough only he could do. To him it seems so simple to sit on the Downs and imagine or remember all that Puck tells us. So simple to fudge Kim and the Lama. The chapter on Origins in this book (IV) is borne out by Kipling's own revelations, and the curse on the American literary pirates is

emphasized, while *The Times* forgery of *The Old Volunteer* evidently rankled in his soul (Chapter III). His father's role as mentor and confidant, and his mother's as censor, are feelingly referred to, and the short story of his life and adventures—it is exasperatingly short—will endear him the more to all the world.

The last lines read with an unearthly touch, as he describes his writing-table. "Left and right of the table were two big globes, on one of which a great airman had once outlined in white paint those air-routes to the East and Australia which were well in use before my death."

### *The Conclusion of the Matter*

In trying to sum up this slight study of the more popular portion of Rudyard Kipling's vast output, what more can one say than that it affords pleasure and instruction which no other writer in the English language can give to most of us. Though sufficiently virile and patriotic to reduce one small residue of non-patriots to anger and tears, even that portion of his message is small compared with the countless stories and verse that deal in understanding of the joy, sorrow and intricacies of the races within our Imperial Commonwealth. The stories of soldiers, of Colonial servants, and of pioneers in their sacrifices, are far less than those of women in their joy and troubles and triumph, than children and dogs in their lives and faithfulness of men in all their moods.

There are certain interesting points connected with Kipling's career as a writer and the niche—nay, the shrine—that he occupies in national opinion, which mark him as the literary phenomenon of the age. Not a day passes without several quotations in the more important portion of the Press of his sayings and writings and lessons, or the apt use of quotations from his verse to point the word and adorn the tale.

No other writer has been so universally a *persona grata* in all national circles. Every great house in England was open to him ; any flagship, any general's headquarters, any Air Force dignitary would receive, while gun-room, ward-room, or company mess would equally hail him as one of themselves and lodge him enthusiastically. Every Government House flying the British flag or its derivative was as his own. In France . . . the heart of France is deep, inscrutable in its regard and affection ! To every Scout rally he would be hailed as greater even than the master himself. Even William Hohenzollern kept *If*

framed before him, and in that home where he awaits the end of all things, does so with that dignity which *If* could inculcate.

If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster  
And treat those two impostors just the same.

That is the ex-Emperor from whom the late King told me he had not heard since the War began.

What more can artist and patriot wish for? The hearts of a people are a better shrine than even a tomb in the Abbey—even in the Poets' Corner—while for those who judge success by coarser standards, there is the equivalent of the box-office to satisfy the guardians of Grub Street.

Should the next two generations revere Kipling as have their predecessors, then nothing in this world will part Britain and her heritage, nor Britons and their character.

When Kipling was a young writer, and therefore duly chid for presumption, he wrote :

It is enough that through Thy Grace  
I saw naught common on Thy Earth.

Those were the spacious days when good Queen Victoria ruled the land, and we were as much in the van of progress as we are now ; our railways were even then the last word, and our young people were being trained to make the Britain of today, before the lesser bookmakers thought Victorianism and Edwardianism words for laughter. Then it was that Kipling saw naught common, and he never saw it or sang of it since.

When he met what was trivial or unworthy he dipped his pen in the violet pot of satire and wrote *The Gods of the Copy-Book Headings* ; but not only was it his claim, but his gift from the Infinite, to see the wonder and the good in the simplest and most humble.

Yea, as we are, and we are not, and we pretend to be,  
The people, Lord, Thy people, are good enough for me.

And again :

A veil to draw 'twixt God His Law  
And man's infirmity.

And lest no link should be missing to bind him with the generation among whom he wrote and sang, read from the walls of the old Norman church at Burwash :

## JOHN KIPLING

GAVE HIS LIFE TO HIS COUNTRY IN  
THE WORLD WAR

AGED

EIGHTEEN YEARS AND SIX WEEKS "

Are not those words "eighteen years and six weeks" enough to make the memory of father and son "For Ever Britain" ?

THE END

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